

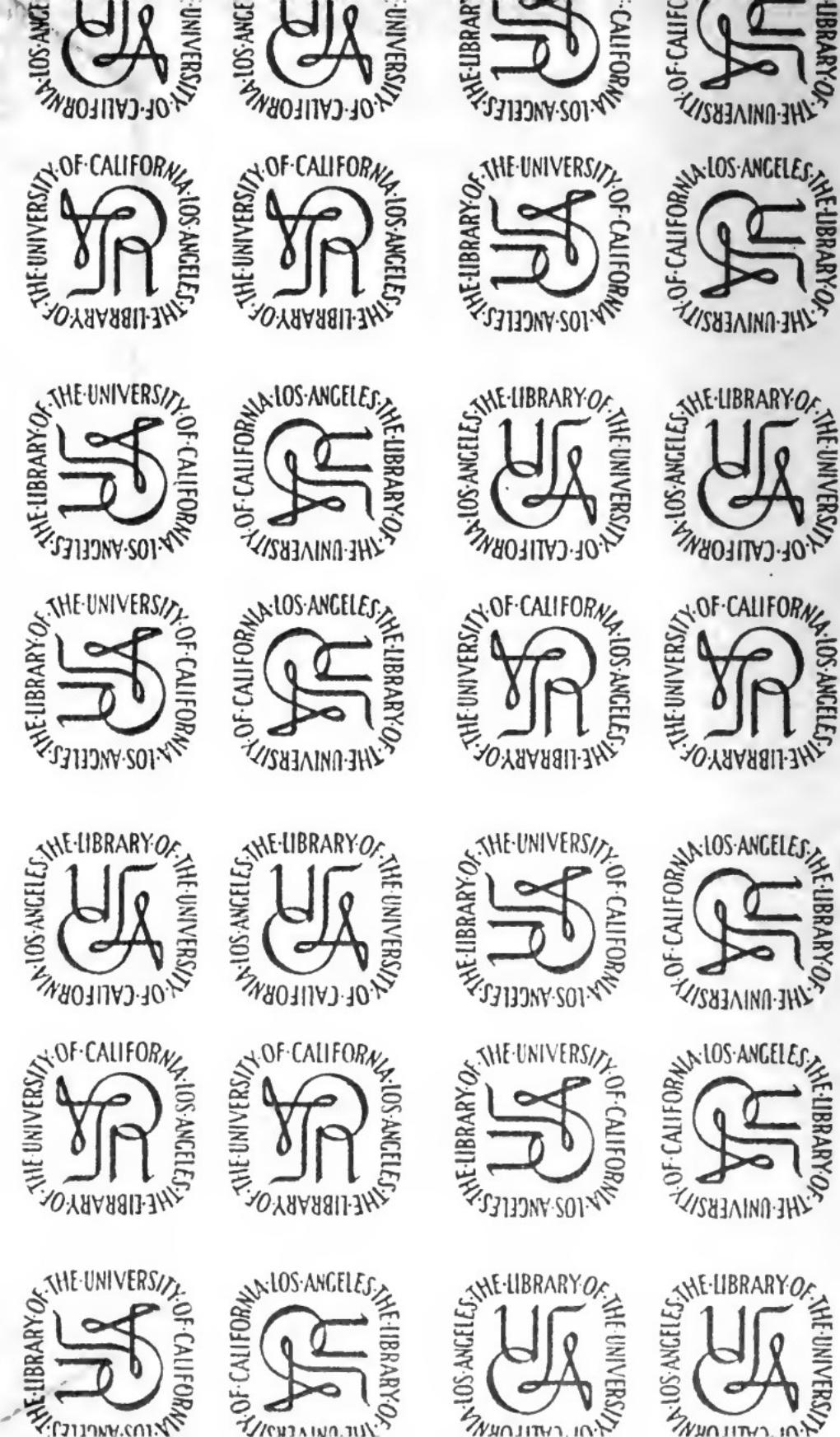
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With blessing
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IN AND AROUND
THE OLD
ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL
OF NEW ORLEANS

BY
REV. C. M. CHAMBON



NEW ORLEANS
Philippe's Printery, Exchange Place
1908

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BY C. M. CHAMBON
NEW ORLEANS

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TO THE MEMORY
OF THE
MISSIONARIES AND COLONISTS
WHOSE
FAITH AND GALLANTRY
MADE OF
LOUISIANA A LAND OF RELIGION AND ROMANCE
THIS ESSAY IS
HUMBLY INSCRIBED

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INTRODUCTION.

This publication does not lay claim to originality. It has been composed with the help of many sympathizers, and some of its pages are mere translations of old documents or quotations from periodicals and local publications.

The author wrote with the sacred love of the past, but never failed to aim to the verity of facts, even when he found it necessary to differ from noted historians whose merits are beyond question. The best tribute one could ever confer on the Mother Church of Louisiana is to present its history clothed in the divine garb of truth.

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PART I.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES.



CHAPTER I.

THE SAINT LOUIS PARISH CHURCH OF NEW ORLEANS AND THE CAPUCHIN FATHERS OF FRANCE AND SPAIN IN LOUISIANA.

FIRST RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES OF NEW ORLEANS—ORGANIZATION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN LOUISIANA—THE CAPUCHIN FATHERS OF CHAMPAGNE—NEW ORLEANS AND ITS PEOPLE IN EARLY COLONIAL DAYS—THE JESUIT WAR—THE CAPUCHIN QUARREL—TRUTH BETTER THAN LEGEND—THE END OF AN EPOCH.

It is impossible not to feel the peaceful repose, the strange stillness which pervades the atmosphere of the Saint Louis Cathedral: romance and religion blend there more closely than at any other spot of this quaint old city. But few, if any, of the vast throngs that daily cross its threshold have ever given a thought to its predecessor, an humble church of old wherein, for more than sixty years, Capuchin Fathers toiled and ministered to the settlers and colonists of the earlier New Orleans.

This Saint Louis Parish Church, as it was called, has long since disappeared, its priests are dead and forgotten, and nothing remains to tell their story but a few documents, almost all incomplete, disorderly, and some partly altered by legend.

Nevertheless, each and every one of them is a fragment of history, and all deserved to be gathered

as to give not only a mere accumulation of facts, but also the true significance of their compilation.

* * *

Although the Saint Louis Parish Church traces its origin to the very beginning of the foundation of New Orleans, it was not the first religious edifice ever erected in this city. According to the historian, Charlevoix, the Saint Louis Parish Church was preceded by another church and two temporary shelters devoted to religious purposes.

“I have at last arrived in this famous city called La Nouvelle-Orléans,” writes Charlevoix to the Duchess of Lesdiguières on January 10, 1722 * * * about a hundred huts placed here and there, a large store of wood, one or three houses and half of a miserable store comprise the town; the humblest village in France can boast of better homes. It was in this little store the Lord was first worshipped, but hardly had He been placed therein, when they had Him removed to place Him under a tent.” To our eyes, an utter disregard of religion, but little else could be expected from the settlers who first cleared the land and built some hundred huts along the river. They were not May Flower Pilgrims, but mostly traders, soldiers and adventurers, whose religious feelings had been undoubtedly dulled by their life of travel and hardships.

However, shortly after Charlevoix’s visit, and possibly at his own instigation, something more decent than a tent was offered to the Lord as a house of worship. This was a small stucco church, the first regular church ever built in New Orleans. Lovenstein, in his history of the Saint Louis Cathedral,

asserts that this church had been dedicated to Saint Ignatius, its reector being a Capuchin father named Matthias; but of this we find no record whatsoever. All we know of this first parish church of New Orleans is its destruction by a terrible hurricane which occurred on the 11th of September, 1723.

Again New Orleans was without a place of worship, and the prospects of the Church in this new country would have been hopeless if a religious organization had not been already planned and fostered for Louisiana.

* * *

Catholicism had penetrated into Louisiana with civilization. De Soto, La Salle, Bienville, in all their expeditions, were accompanied by missionaries. Priests from Canada came down the Mississippi with the traders and the soldiers to christianize the Southern tribes and minister to the first settlers scattered along the Gulf and the lower banks of the "Great River."

But these missionaries were almost without resources, completely isolated, and thus their ministry could not be progressive or fruitful; a more systematic as well as a broader ecclesiastical government was deemed imperative.

Reports had reached Bishop Saint Vallier of Quebec about the laxity of religion and utter disregard of moral law then prevailing among the colonists of Louisiana. These reports, together with other statements from authentic sources about the spiritual destitution of the colony, induced the Western Company's Commissioners to come to a

better fulfilment of the duties they had shouldered in obtaining the monopoly of trade in Louisiana. "As we regard particularly the glory of God, reads the 53rd clause of the 'Lettres Patentés,' we desire the Inhabitants, Indians, Negroes, to be taught the true religion. The said Company shall be compelled to build, at its expense, churches at the place where it forms settlements, as also to maintain the required number of approved ecclesiastics, either with the rank of parish priests, or such men as shall be suitable to preach the Holy Gospel, perform divine service and administer the sacraments; all to be under the authority of the Bishop of Quebec, the said colony remaining in his diocese as heretofore, and the parish priests and other ecclesiastics which the Company shall maintain there, being at his nomination and under his patronage."

With the consent of the Bishop of Quebec, the Commissioners of the Council of the Western Company issued an ordinance, May 16, 1722, dividing Louisiana into three ecclesiastical sections. North of the Ohio was intrusted to the Society of Jesus and the priests of the Foreign Missions of Quebec and Paris.

The district between the Mississippi and the Rio Perdito, as also the country north of the Ohio, was tendered to the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, with their headquarters in Mobile. The French and Indian settlements of the Lower Mississippi were assigned to the Capuchin Fathers of the Province of Champagne, France.

Not long after, this division was greatly altered. The Carmelites were recalled and their district given over to the Capuchins. But they, not having the

requisite number of priests, forced the Western Company to intrust the religious welfare of all the Indian tribes to the Jesuit Fathers. Thus, Louisiana was finally divided between the Capuchins and the Jesuits: the former in charge of the colonists and the latter in charge of the Indians. Both the superiors of these orders were vicar-generals of the Bishop of Quebec, each in his own jurisdiction.

* * *

It is no wonder that we find the Jesuits among the pioneers of religion in Louisiana. They are and have been nearly everywhere where Christianity could be propagated. But the presence of the Capuchins, under these Southern skies, astonishes us somewhat. In fact, their coming into this country originated from a mere coincidence. When the Commissioners of the Western Company applied for missionaries, the spiritual welfare of the colony was intrusted to Louis Francis Duplessis de Mornay, Bishop "in partibus" of Eumenia and Coadjutor to the Bishop of Quebec.

This prelate, who had been a Capuchin himself, resided in Paris, and from there supervised and directed the missionaries of the province. When the Western Company applied to him in 1717 for missionaries to be sent in Louisiana, Bishop de Mornay tendered the offer to the Capuchin Order, from which he came. They accepted gratefully and received the King's approval on April of the same year.

However, their earliest appearance in their new field of labor is not chronicled before 1720, three years after their assignment. Father Jean Matthien de

Sainte Anne is the first whose name has been recorded in this country. He signs himself in the register of the parish of New Orleans on the 22d of October, 1720, as "Jean Matthieu de Sainte Anne, Prêtre Missionnaire et Curé du Vieux Biloxi." Further on, on the 18th of January, 1721, he again signs himself as "Vicaire Apostolique et Curé de La Mobile."

In 1722 Father Bruno de Langres sailed from France with several of his brethren. Father Raphael de Luxembourg, Superior of the Capuchin Missions in Louisiana, arrived the following spring, 1723, and took charge of the Parish Church of New Orleans.

A register in the Saint Louis Cathedral archives shows his signature August 18th, 1723, as "F. Raphael de Luxembourg, Supérieur de la Mission et Curé de l'Église paroissiale."

A little later, January, 1724, he adds the title of Vicar-General, which he had received from the Bishop of Quebec.

The first Capuchins who came to Louisiana had much to contend with upon their arrival in New Orleans. Their congregation was scattered over a large area, and, added to their poverty, there was a total ignorance of religion. Colonists were even imbued with the skepticism and naturalism, which at that time were already undermining the French nation.

Father Raphael tells us when he landed in New Orleans he could hardly secure a room for himself and his brethren to occupy, and much less one to convert into a chapel, for the population was indifferent to all that savored of the church. On Sundays, a little over thirty persons attended mass. Undaunted, the Capuchin Fathers toiled on and at last

were rewarded by seeing dormant hearts pulsate once more for their religion. The garb of these monks became a familiar sight and the ceremonies of the Church brought the colonists sweet recollections of their mother country.

Less than a couple of years following his arrival, Father Raphael was gladdened by the erection of a church built to replace the first one prematurely destroyed by the hurricane of September, 1723. It was on a larger scale than the former, built of brick and dedicated to Saint Louis, in honor of Louis the Fifteenth, then King of France.

Thus, after years of hardships and trials, the Capuchins were comparatively established in a stately manner, and their "Saint Louis Parish Church" was destined to become, for a period of sixty years and more, the center of the colonial life in New Orleans.

* * *

When New Orleans completed its first decade of existence, the Saint Louis Parish Church was the only redeeming feature of the city. Although it was comparatively a small and poorly decorated church, its spire towered over the other buildings with somewhat of majesty. The Capuchins' residence stood at its left, the Guard House at its right. In front of its porch, the "Place d'Armes" infolded a square of green, through which two diagonal alleys led to the harbor. The homes of the colonial officials and commercial potentates were mostly situated on the water front or along Chartres street. The "Place d'Armes" and its surroundings were then the fashionable quarters.

As for the rest, it was forlorn confusion, and, though the plan of the city showed a large parallelogram of five thousand feet of river front by a depth of eighteen hundred, yet, the greatest part of it was rather disorderly and squalid, the ground being occupied but by a few scattered log cabins, thatched with cypress, isolated from each other by willow brakes, sloughs, bristling with dwarf palmettoes and reedy ponds swarming with reptiles. No one yet had built beyond Dauphine street, nor below the Hospital—now the corner of Chartres and Hospital streets—nor above Bienville, except the Governor, whose palace stood at the extreme upper corner of the town—now Customhouse and Decatur streets.

Such was New Orleans when it completed its first decade of existence. If we deprive the vision of its halo, the New Orleans of 1728 was nothing more than a poor village, hastily built between a formidable river and dismal swamps. Nevertheless it was New Orleans, and beyond the far horizon, the wise could foresee its future glory already dawning. In his letter to the Duchess of Lesdiguières, Charlevoix wrote these prophetic words: “My hopes, I think, are well founded that this wild and desert place, which the reeds and trees still cover almost entirely, will be one day, and that day not far distant, a city of opulence, and the metropolis of a great and rich colony.”

We cannot, indeed, refrain from wonder and admiration when we think of the little village of 1728, and compare it to the New Orleans of to-day, graciously bending its mighty crescent along the restless waters of the Mississippi.

Although New Orleans by no means in its beginnings suggested the splendors of Paris, there was no lack of interest in its social life. There was a Governor with a military staff; and the army officers, with their manners once displayed at the Court of Versailles, lent to the colonial life an air of gallantry and grandeur. As in France, in this time, the Government was in close touch with the Church: the Governor used to call on the good Capuchin Fathers and his wife visited the Ursuline Ladies who had come to take charge of the hospital and give the daughters of the colonists the thorough education imparted in French convents.

But besides the manners and usages imported from the mother country, there were also quaint customs which gave to the Louisiana of colonial days characteristics so much talked of in romance and so little known in history.

There has been lately discovered, in the archives of the Saint Louis Cathedral, a document partially illustrating this subject. It refers to a meeting held by the prominent citizens of the city at which were discussed the most feasible ways and means of raising the necessary funds for the erection of a presbytery.

The following extract is translated from the original: "This second day of November, 1738, the inhabitants of the colony assembled at the Hotel of the Intendance, upon the requisition of Father Matthias, Vicar-General to the Bishop of Quebec, in presence of Mr. de Bienville, Governor of the province of Louisiana, and Mr. Salmon, Commissary of the Navy and First Justice of the Superior Coun-

eil. The assembly had been announced yesterday in the parish church of this city, and the bells were rung to call the meeting to-day.” Then follow the deliberations “which could not be put into execution on account—says a later report—of a war and general famine, which broke out in the colony.” In 1744 this same project was revived and the following resolutions adopted: “A tax of fifty cents will be imposed upon all the inhabitants of the parish for each and every head of negroes. In addition to this the inhabitants have agreed upon a personal tax proportioned to the amount of real estate owned by them, said amount to be decided by a board composed of ten of the most prominent citizens.”

Through the generosity of the parishioners the presbytery was erected. There dwelt the parish priest,

Father Raphael de Luxembourg, with his assistant,
Father Hyacinthe, and the school master,
Father Cécil.

It also served as a “pied-à-terre” for the following Capuchin Fathers, then in charge of the country missions:

Father Théodore, from Chapitoulas.
Father Philippe, from Les Allemands.
Father Gaspard, from La Balize.
Father Matthias, from La Mobile.
Father Maximin, from Natchitoches.
Father Philibert, from Natchez.
Father Victorin Dupuy, from Les Apalaches.

The decisions of the Western Company gave to the Capuchins the exclusive control of the colonists; as we already know, the evangelization of the Indians had been intrusted to the Jesuit Fathers. Their Superior, Father Petit, resided in New Orleans, as the most convenient place to have his headquarters to direct and support his brethren in charge of the tribes and whose names, taken from a report of that time, are as follows:

Father Poisson, with the Arkansas.

Father Tartarin and

Father Le Boulenger at Kaskia.

Father Guypeneau among the Metchigameas.

Father Doutreleau on the Ouabache.

Father Souel among the Yazooes.

Father Beaudouin, who was then attempting the dangerous task of establishing a mission among the treacherous Chickasaws.

Notwithstanding the distinct and separate jurisdiction of the Capuchins and of the Jesuits, there occurred some friction between these two orders, which gave rise to a series of contentions known derisively as the "War of the Capuchins with the Jesuits."

Father Beaudouin, having received a commission as Vicar-General from the Bishop of Quebec, performed in that capacity certain ceremonies in the city. The Capuchin Fathers, together with the Councillmen, protested against what they considered an encroachment upon their rights in their jurisdiction, adding that according to their agreement with the Western Company, the Superior of the Jesuits could reside in New Orleans, but could not, without their consent,

perform therein any religious function. To this the Jesuits objected, maintaining that there was no violation of the established rules, as their Superior acted not as a Jesuit, but as Vicar-General to the Bishop of Quebec. So the motive of the famous war was a mere question of jurisdiction; in reality a petty discussion unworthy of notice. Some writers, however, have exaggerated its importance, but failed at the same time to emphasize the shameful spoliation of the Jesuits by the French Government, which suddenly put an end to the quarrel. For it was at this same time, the 9th of June, 1763, that an Aet of the Superior Council of Louisiana suppressed the Order of the Jesuits throughout the colony, saying it was dangerous to the royal authority, to the rights of the bishops, to the public peace and safety. The Jesuits were forbidden to use the name of their society, as also their habit. Their property was confiscated and sold for \$180,000. Moreover, the Jesuits were not only deprived of their property, but their chapel was leveled to the ground, leaving exposed the vaults wherein the dead were interred. They were compelled to give up their missions, and were placed on a vessel about to sail for France.

Not only did the Capuchins forget their dissensions, but interfered in the behalf of the Jesuits, going so far as to offer them a temporary shelter alongside their own. The latter, greatly pleased by this solicitude, expressed their gratitude by leaving their hosts the books they had saved from the spoliation.

It is sad to say that the same writer who described the Capuchin war to its trifling details, did

not find a single word wherewith to blame the spoliators who marred our history with such a shameful crime against the right of property and human liberty. Among the men responsible for this horrible profanation, La Frenière's name alone descended to us. Strange to say, his fate was an awful one. Less than six years after the exile of the Jesuits he was charged with conspiracy and put to death by the Spanish Government. In history he is ranked among the martyrs of liberty; but who could heartily give such a title to the very one who shamefully wronged his fellow citizens, and banished those who had contributed so much, both to the social and the maternal advancement of the colony?

* * *

Out of the nine or ten Capuchins left in Louisiana, when the Jesuits were expelled, five resided in New Orleans, with Father Dagobert de Longny at their head. He had succeeded as superior Father Hilaire de Génévaux, exiled from the province some years previous, for having refused to share in a scheme of revolt planned by the councilmen against the Spaniards. Father Dagobert was well known and beloved in the colony. Having landed in New Orleans in the very beginning of 1723, he was already an old man when promoted to the Superiorship of his Order. He lived long enough, however, to witness the landing of the Spaniards, as also the first years of O'Reilly's administration. It was he who stood on the threshold of the church to welcome this famous General in the name of the clergy and parishioners,

when the latter, on the 18th of August, 1769, surrounded by his escort in gorgeous array, crossed the “Place d’Armes” and proceeded to the church.



Photo C. M. C. Courtesy of Miss De Villiers.

REV. FATHER DAGOBERT DE LONGUY.

Amidst the honors and solemnities befitting the occasion, Father Dagobert promised fidelity to the Crown of Spain and blessed the new colors which were hoisted in place of the white banner of France.

The change of government caused a change of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The province passed from the hands of the Bishop of Quebec

to the hands of the Bishop of Santiago of Cuba. At first the new prelate confirmed Father Dagobert in his capacity of Vicar-General, with which he had been invested after the expulsion of the Jesuits. This was the wish of Louis XV, who asked, in the cession of Louisiana, “for the ecclesiastics to be continued in their functions in the province.” But, soon, this royal wish was disregarded, and not long after the landing of O'Reilly, Spanish Capuchins began to fill the place of their French brethren.

This action, however, did not pass without trouble, and the same monks who protested against the alleged encroachments of the Jesuits, tried, some ten years after, to oppose the pretensions of the Spanish Capuchins. Contradictory reports reached the new bishop about religious conditions in Louisiana, and led him to investigate. For this purpose he sent Father Cyrillo de Barcelona, with four Spanish Capuchins, to New Orleans, namely: Father Francisco, Father Angel de Revillagodos, Father Louis de Quintanilla and Father Aleman. They landed on the 19th of July, 1773. Father Dagobert, leading the French Capuchins, and followed by a large crowd, went in a procession to the levee. Standing in front of the "Place d'Armes" the new comers were received with due honors and great demonstrations of joy. The next day they were formally introduced to Governor Unzaga. Father Cyrillo then presented his credentials from the bishop, whereupon the Governor expressed his willingness to carry into execution the mandates of his superior, the Bishop of Cuba.

Fathers Aleman and Angel de Revillagodos were at once appointed to parishes requiring pastors, and Father Cyrillo, with his two other companions, remained in New Orleans as Father Dagobert's guests. This arrangement, however, was not destined to last, both characters being utterly dissimilar. Father Dagobert was more a father than a monk; having come into the colony as a young missionary, he had baptized and married almost every one. He was kind, meek, and always ready to render a service to the humblest of his flock, thus inspiring love instead of fear and mistrust.

Father Cyrillo was the very opposite of this. Brought up in the Spanish convents, where stern discipline knew no master, he always abided by the rigid rules of his Order. Therefore, the manner in which his French brethren exercised their duties seemed scandalous to him, and he informed the Bishop of Cuba concerning what he considered lax methods of administration. Governor Unzaga interfered in behalf of the French Capuchins, and wrote a letter of remonstrance to the bishop, in which he censured the Spanish friars severely. This offended the bishop and both parties referred the matter to the Spanish Court. The Government, without expressing a decisive opinion, advised both Prelate and Governor to compromise their disagreement so as to better preserve harmony between civil and ecclesiastical authorities. And peace was once more restored: Father Cyrillo continued to minister with an indomitable zeal, whilst Father Dagobert remained in charge of the Saint Louis Parochial Church of New Orleans until his death, which occurred on the 31st of May, 1776.

The funeral services were conducted by Father Cyrillo himself, and he signed the following entry in the mortuary register:

“I, Cyrillo de Barcelona.....performed the funeral service of Rev. Dagobert of Longuy of the Province of Champagne, a member of the Capuchin Order, and Apostolic Missionary of this Province for fifty-three years, eleven months and eleven days, as it appears from his act of obedience to the Rev. Bartholome y Faxera. He was rector of this Parish Church when he died, at the age of seventy-four

years, nine months and eleven days, on the 31st of May, having received all the sacraments of the Church in the Presbytery.

“New Orleans, June 1st, 1776.

“REV. CYRILLO DE BARCELONA.”

* * *

The same historian who related, as the world believes, so graphically, even to the minutest details, the war of the Capuehins with the Jesuits, deemed “it not inappropriate” to give in full the dreadful letters of Cyrillo; but this historian had failed to offer a true explanation of the cause and character of the whole quarrel.

Some speak of Father Dagobert as if he was a saint, others paint him in the most ugly colors. But all exaggerate, and it is more truthful to say that Father Dagobert deserves neither that excess of honor, bestowed on him by some, nor the indignity heaped upon his memory by others. Governor Unzaga eulogizes Father Dagobert and refers to him as a man loved and revered by the people, a most deserving priest, in whom one could not detect a single one of the crimes imputed to him. Moreover, if he had been as this historian depicts him, he could not have escaped Count O'Reilly's vigilant eye, as the latter lived but a few yards distant from him, and would have had him removed for less than his accusers charged him. “The declarations which are sometimes found in the writings of that day, respecting clerical depravity,” says a writer, whose impartiality is universally recognized, “as a rule, had their origin in monastic prejudice or secular antipathies.

The clergy must have shared in the virtues of that period, for, otherwise, their influence among the people would appear incomprehensible."

As to Cyrillo's accusations, they must not be attributed to bad faith; for when he arrived in Louisiana he was totally ignorant of the customs and language of the country. Misguided by his zeal, he saw in Father Dagobert's methods much to censure, and thought it his duty to express his indignation to the Bishop of Cuba.

But to depict Father Cyrillo as ambitious and intriguing would be doing him a most undeserved injustice, as he led a very saintly life during his stay in the colony. When Father Cyrillo succeeded Father Dagobert as the head of the Parochial Church of New Orleans, the King of Spain was informed that the Sacrament of Confirmation had never been administered in Louisiana, owing to the impossibility of the Bishop of Cuba traveling to such a remote part of his diocese. Therefore, the King resolved in his Council of the Indies, July 10, 1779, to apply to the Holy See to give the Superior of the Missions in Louisiana the power to confer Confirmation for a period of twenty years. This proposition was not favorably received, but the appointment of an auxiliary bishop was suggested, with his headquarters in New Orleans, whence he could visit the missions on the Mississippi as well as Mobile, Pensacola and St. Augustine.

The Pope favored the plan and appointed Father Cyrillo de Barcelona Auxiliary Bishop to the See of Santiago of Cuba, with the title of Bishop "in partibus infidelium" of Tricali. The new prelate was consecrat-

ed in 1781 and proceeded to New Orleans, which then for the first time enjoyed the presence of a Bishop. Cyrillo, being a really holy and saintly man, infused new life into the province. In 1786 he issued a pastoral letter, urging his flock in eloquent terms to attend mass on Sundays and Holy days, denouncing the wicked custom of the negroes who, at the vespers hour, assembled in a green expanse called “Place Congo” to dance the bamboula and perform the hideous rites imported from Africa by the Yolofs, Fou-lahs, Bambarras, Mandigoes and other races of the Dark Continent.

This zealous prelate proved tireless, faithfully visiting the country parishes, and leaving on the parochial register a detailed report of his investigations, urging everywhere the careful fulfilment of the mandates of the Council of Trent. During his administration the number of priests in Louisiana increased rapidly, and from the official accounts we find five priests in New Orleans and one in the following places: Terre aux Bœux, Saint Charles, Saint John the Baptist, or Bonnet Carré, Saint James, Ascension, Saint Gabriel at Iberville, Pointe Coupée, Attakapas, Opelousas, Natchitoches, Natchez, Saint Louis, Sainte Geneviève, Saint Bernard, at Manchae, or Galveston.

Bishop Cyrillo's services in Louisiana were cut short by the establishment of the province into a diocese independent from the See of Cuba, in 1793.

“His Holiness” wrote the King, on the 23rd of November, 1793, “having issued the consistorial decree for the dismemberment of Louisiana and Florida and the establishment of a new Bishopric in these provinces, I have decided to withdraw your office of

Auxiliary, and order you to return to your Capuchin Province of Catalonia, with a salary of \$1,000 per year."

Bishop Cyrillo returned to Havana and abided with the Hospital Friars until such time as he could obtain the payment of his salary, whereby he could obey the King by returning to his own country. We have no record of when or how Bishop Cyrillo died. But this much we know, his life was one of trials and hardships, ending in poverty and humility. Such was the man who unconsciously started and fought the famous "Quarrel of the Capuchins."

The lives and the deeds of both Fathers Dagobert and Cyrillo, better than any plea, show that the quarrel originated from the contact of two men diversely educated, but by no means sprung from their ambition or jealousy. Instead of "an historical illustration" that Gayarré deemed "not inappropriate" to insert in his history, he has only succeeded in writing a tale "à la Rabelais," but in a much less talented way.



When Bishop Cyrillo was appointed Auxiliary Bishop to the See of Cuba, with the special care of Louisiana and Florida, he resigned the rectorship of the Saint Louis Parochial Church and appointed in his stead Father Antonio de Sedela y Arze.

This famous monk, better known as "Père Antoine," was the last rector of the Parish Church, but by no means the less illustrious.

If we include the two priests who had exercised the functions of rectors in New Orleans, previously

to the erection of the Saint Louis Parish Church in 1724 or 1725, we obtain the following complete list of the rectors of the ecclesiastical parish of New Orleans, from the foundation of the city to 1788, when the Saint Louis Parish Church met with its unexpected fate:

Father Prothay Boyer, 1720, a Recollet.

Father Joseph de Saint Charles, 1721, a priest of the congregation of Saint Theresa.

The Revs. John Matthew of Saint Ann and J. Richard performed their sacred ministry in New Orleans from time to time about 1720, but never assumed the title of rector. They signed "Rector of the 'Vieux Biloxi.'"

Father Bruno de Langres was one of the first Capuchins who landed in New Orleans. He signs as rector of the city from 1722 until 1723, till the arrival of his superior.

Father Raphael de Luxembourg, first Superior of the Capuchins, and rector from 1723 to his death in 1735.

Father Matthias, his successor, was deprived of his functions in 1739 and was succeeded by

Father Philippe de Génévaux, also dismissed in 1741, and succeeded by

Father Charles de Rambervilliers, a holy man, who did much to assure and maintain the concord between the Jesuits and the Capuchins. He died about 1746, and left as his successor

Father Dagobert de Longuy. This latter quarreled again with the Jesuits and was succeeded by

Father George de Fauquemont in 1753. After the

expulsion of the Jesuits, De Fauquemont was supplanted by

Father Hilaire de Génévaux, who arrived from France in August, 1764. The following year he was banished by the Superior Council, and for the second time,

Father Dagobert de Longuy was appointed Superior of the Capuchin Fathers, which office he retained until his death in 1776. Following him came

Father Cyrillo de Barcelona, who himself appointed as his successor

Father Antonio de Sedella, in or about 1785.

The latter had been in charge but a few years when the Saint Louis Parish Church perished in the great conflagration that swept a large area of the city, on March 21st, 1788. So, unexpectedly, there was erased from the heart of the city this church, in which during more than sixty years the people of New Orleans came to worship. Being the only parochial church of the city in colonial days, it was the center of the social and religious life.

With it disappeared the last witness of romantic and chivalrous Louisiana. But its ashes proved immortal, as less than six years after the awful Good Friday of 1788, a majestic Cathedral rose on the very spot whereupon stood the "Saint Louis Parish Church of New Orleans."

CHAPTER II.

DON ANDRES ALMONESTER Y ROXAS.

A NOBLE BENEFACTOR — A SOLEMN DEDICATION — TROUBLES OF A GOLD-HEARTED MAN — “SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI.”

The Saint Louis Cathedral of New Orleans owes its existence to the generosity of Don Andres Almonester y Roxas. This Spanish nobleman was born at Mayrena del Alcor, in the Kingdom of Sevilla. His parents, Don Miguel Jose Almonester and Donna Maria Joanna de Estrada, were members of the first families of Andalusia.

A royal notary, judge, standard bearer, colonel of the militia, knight of the illustrious Order of Carlos III, all these titles were borne by him with the utmost dignity. His memory, however, would long since have been forgotten if it had not been rescued from oblivion by his everlasting generosity.

When in 1779 a terrible hurricane swept away the humble hospital which a simple sailor named Jean Louis founded in 1737, Almonester had another one erected at a cost of no less than \$114,000. In 1787, the same generous benefactor donated a beautiful chapel to the Ursuline Convent and also built schools for the instruction of girls.

A few years later, Almonester acquainted the councilmen (they were at this time administrators of the Church property) with his intention of rebuilding the parish church that had just been destroyed by

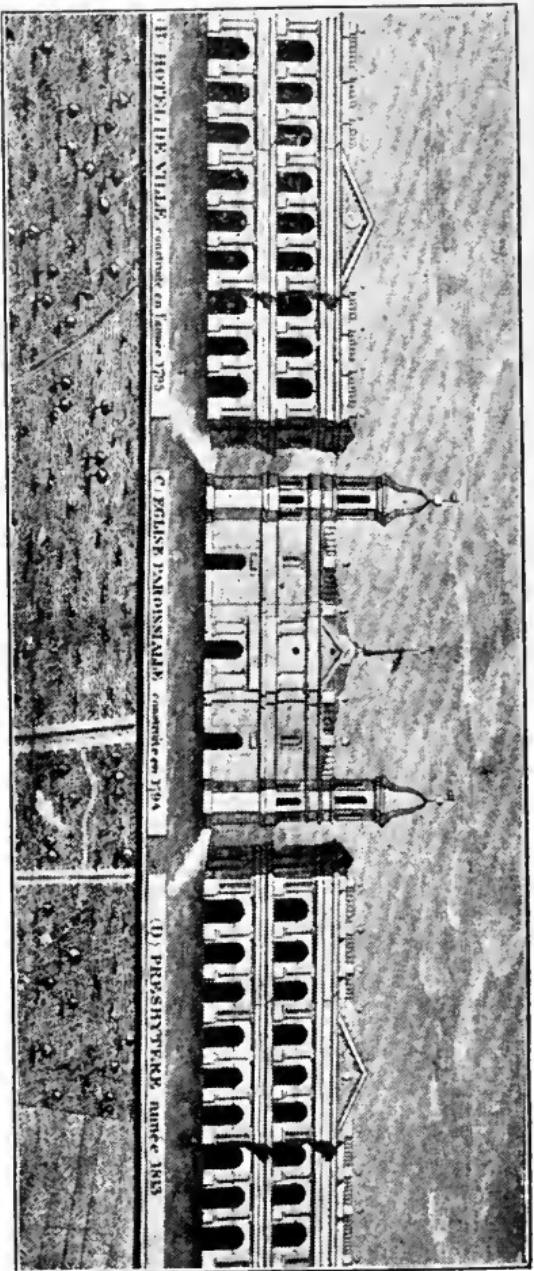


Photo C. M. C.

THE SAINT LOUIS CATHEDRAL OF 1794.

From a Plan in Howard Library.

the fire of March 27, 1788. The offer was gladly accepted and the work of reconstruction was commenced in the spring of the following year.

At the close of 1794, the new edifice was completed, and on Christmas day dedicated with great pomp. Don Joaquin de Portillo, at that time rector of the parish, has left us an accurate account of these ceremonies which we rescued lately from the dusty archives of the Cathedral. This document originally framed in Spanish remained unpublished and is now given to the public for the first time:

“NEW SAINT LOUIS PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF THE
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS.

“*In the year of Our Lord 1794, in the twentieth of the Pontificate of our Holy Father, Pope Pius VI, and in the seventh year of the reign of His Catholic Majesty, Don Carlos VI, Don Louis Penalver y Cardenas, being elected first Bishop of the newly erected See of Louisiana; Baron de Carondelet, Brigadier General of the Royal Army, being Governor of this city and province, on the 23rd day of the month of December, the new St. Louis Parochial Church of this city was blessed.*

“*This parochial church, which became the Cathedral Church since the erection of Louisiana into a diocese distinct from that of Havana, owes its existence to the piety and zeal of Don Andres Almonester y Roxas, a native of the city of Mayrena del Alcor, Kingdom of Sevilla, in Spain, a knight of the illustrious Order of Carlos III, colonel of the militia of New Orleans and perpetual Regidor of the Supreme Court.*

“*This knight, so commendable for his eminent piety, is almost without an equal; the three churches of this city in which are offered prayer and sacrifice to our Lord are monuments of his devotion and piety. At his own expense he built the chapel of the Ursuline Convent, a school for young girls, the Charity Hospital and its chapel, and also donated ground to serve as a site for a lepers' home.*

“ These works alone would suffice to make his name illustrious and gain for him the esteem and friendship of all his fellow-citizens. Yet, he did more. A fire having destroyed the parochial church on the 21st of March, 1788, the grief of the people made him conceive the vast project, worthy of his great heart, of re-building this sanctuary at his own expense. The edifice was begun in March, 1789, and, in spite of a thousand obstacles, Almonester succeeded within five years in giving it the perfection, grandeur, solidity and beauty which we now admire.

“ Finally, the parish being unable, for want of funds, to decorate the interior in a manner worthy of a cathedral, he took upon himself the necessary expense of building a gallery on each side of the nare and providing a beautiful balustrade for the choir, together with a main altar on which the workmen were still engaged when another terrible fire broke out on the 8th of December and destroyed the temporary chapel. The Blessed Sacrament was carried to the chapel of the Ursulines and the ornamentation of the main altar hastily completed to receive our Lord so that the people might with more facility assist at the offices of the Church.

“ The new edifice was blessed on the day and in the year before mentioned, in the presence of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of this city. At the opening of the ceremony, our illustrious benefactor presented the keys of the church to the Governor, who then handed them over to me. Immediately afterwards Don Patricio Walsh, an Irish priest, Chaplain of the Royal Hospital, Foreign Vicar, Ecclesiastical Judge of the Province for the Bishop of Havana (the Bishop of Louisiana having not yet taken possession), blessed the church. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass followed the blessing, and these magnificent ceremonies filled with joy the hearts of all the faithful.

“ The next day, December 24, the clergy assembled in the monastery of the Ursulines, to which the Blessed Sacrament had been carried after the fire of December 8. The Governor, with all the notable personages of the city, also met therein: a procession was formed and the Blessed Sacrament carried with the greatest



Photo B. de Villentroy.

From an Old Painting.

DON ANDRES ALMONESTER Y ROXAS.

solemnity to the new church in which I sang the first Mass and preached the first sermon.

"After the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the ceremony was closed by the chanting of the 'Te Deum' for the greater glory of God, and this was followed by loud salutes of artillery. It is then but just that the people and the ministers of the Church should render perpetual gratitude to their illustrious and noble benefactor, Don Andres Almonester y Roxas, and it is to prevent his works from falling into oblivion that I mention his name here 'AD PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM.'

"December 30th, 1794.

"DON JOAQUIN DE PORTILLO."

* * *

The fame of Almonester did not fail to give offense to some less fortunate or less generous than he. Some misrepresented his intentions and suspected him of ambition; others hindered his plans and did not even hesitate to dispute his right to the control of the hospital which he had founded. Governor Miro, his friend, referred the matter to the King, who speedily put an end to all intrigues and rewarded the generosity of Almonester as became his great merit.

The King wrote:

"Having duly, in this my Council of the Indies, considered the conflicting reports presented to me, Don Andres Almonester is to be relieved from the obligation of accounting for his administrative acts in the hospital which he founded. * * * He is authorized to occupy the most prominent seat in his church, second only to that of the royal Vice Patron (the Intendant of the Province), and to receive the Kiss of Peace (*la paz*) during the celebration of Mass. He is entitled to assistance in case of neces-



Photo B. de Villentroy.

From an Old Painting.

RIGHT REV. PENALVER Y CARDENAS.

sity, and in order that these ordinances shall be faithfully carried out according to my royal command, it is again ordered that the aforesaid Almonester, whatever may betide, is to be given loyal support and aid in whatever he may undertake, and, so as to preclude all further cause of complaint, he is to be treated in future with deferential regard as one who has found grace near my royal person (grato a me real persona) by the achievement of great works, by drawing so generously upon his own resources for the construction of the parochial church, the Ursuline Convent, the Charity Hospital and the Government Buildings of New Orleans. All of which and of his free will, he has accomplished in honor of his religion and of his state, and for the edification and encouragement of mankind.

“Therefore, I do hereby order and command the aforesaid Governor of the Province of Louisiana, and also the Intendant of my Royal Exchequer, together with the judges and justices of the above mentioned province to keep, comply with, and execute this, my royal decree, without contravening it, for such is my royal will.

“YO EL REY.”

Given at San Ildefonso, August 14th, 1794.

* * *

Nothing is more fleeting than glory. In the same registers in which Don Joaquin de Portillo had written, in 1794, the dithyrambic praise of the founder of the Saint Louis Cathedral, Don Perez recorded, four years later, the death of the generous nobleman.

paraícer más conforme este motivo, que el vecindario pague
hacer una regulación, que aprueba el S^r. Gobernador, segun la
qual se han distribuido los Pisos a los que los han querido,
por el orden siguiente.

Lado del Evangelio

Nº 1. Hernandez y su familia	01.50
2. Andres Fernandez y Rojas s. con su hermano inscripto	02.00
Nº 2. El S ^r Coronel Francisco Jimenez	036
Nº 3. El S ^r Angel Ramiés	035
Nº 4. Padre Sabio Diazoy	034
Nº 5. El S ^r Antonio Ramis Mayordomo	034
Nº 6. El S ^r Bartolomeo Bonner	032
Nº 7. El S ^r Francisco Sales Tradiello	034
Nº 8. Monseñor Cabalier	030
Nº 9. El S ^r Vicente Cofet	029
Nº 10. El S ^r Francisco Lopez Villanueva	023
Nº 11. Monseñor Drey y su Familia	027
Nº 12. El S ^r Francisco de Soto	026
Nº 13. El S ^r Agustín	025
Nº 14. El S ^r Pedro Alfonso	024
Nº 15. Monseñor Toribio	023
Nº 16. Monseñor Pedro Joseon	022
Nº 17. Padre Matias	024
Nº 18. El S ^r Joaquin de Porras	021
Nº 19.	019
Nº 20.	019
Nº 21.	018
Nº 22.	016

Total de Pisos vendidos al Evangelio 476

Sobrevendrán por las mas bajas hasta la fecha que los que estan
asignados, nombra el impuesto de los que no tienen casa año a noviembre
ciento y un pesos fuertes, y para que cada uno tiene con el mayordomo
de la Catedral en la Cuerda de la Catedral o sus oficinas en el centro y en el Surio
y mil setecientos quarenta pesos.

Jr. Joaquin de Porras

Lado de la Epistola

Nº 1. Destinado a los families del S ^r . Gobernador, y el S ^r .	000
Untendite	000
Nº 2. El S ^r Francisco Trujillo	036
Nº 3. Padre a S ^r . Maxent.	035
Nº 4. Matas	034
Nº 5. S ^r . Juan Fornaret	033
Nº 6. S ^r . Pedro Marin Angel	032
Nº 7. Llorente	025
Nº 8. Monseñor Drey y su Familia	020
Nº 9. S ^r . Agustin	020
Nº 10. Padre Joseon	020
Nº 11. Andres Fernandez	023
Nº 12. Gómez	021
Nº 13. Miguel Fortier	026
Nº 14. Medina Paris	025
Nº 15. Llorente	024
Nº 16. Monseñor Joseon	023
Nº 17. Llorente	022
Nº 18. Monseñor Joseon	020
Nº 19.	019
Nº 20.	018
Nº 21.	017
Nº 22.	016

Total de Pisos vendidos al Epistola 445

Don Andres Almonester y Roxas had died so suddenly that it was impossible to even administer to him the last sacraments of the Church.

His corpse was solemnly lowered under the altar of the Sacred Heart in the Saint Louis Cathedral.

A marble slab in the pavement marks the place of his tomb and bears his coat-of-arms together with the record of his life, titles and services. The carved letters are still visible, although somewhat effaced by the ceaseless tread of several generations. The inscription written in Spanish is generally translated as follows:

HERE LIE THE REMAINS
OF
DON ANDRES ALMONESTER Y ROXAS
A NATIVE OF MAYRENA,
IN THE KINGDOM OF ANDALUSIA.
HE DIED IN THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS,
ON THE 26TH DAY OF APRIL, 1708,
BEING 73 YEARS OF AGE.
A KNIGHT OF THE ROYAL AND DISTINGUISHED
ORDER OF CHARLES III,
COLONEL OF THE MILITIA OF THIS DEPARTMENT,
ALDERMAN AND ROYAL LIEUTENANT OF THIS CORPORATION,
FOUNDER AND DONOR OF THIS HOLY CATHEDRAL,
FOUNDER OF THE ROYAL HOSPITAL OF ST.
CHARLES AND OF ITS CHURCH,
FOUNDER OF THE HOSPITAL FOR LEOPERS,
FOUNDER OF THE URSULINES CONVENT,
FOUNDER OF THE SCHOOL FOR THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS,
FOUNDER OF THE COURT HOUSE,
ALL OF WHICH HE HAD BUILT AT HIS OWN EXPENSE
IN THIS CITY.
REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

The city has long since forgotten the man whose name was synonymous with generosity. It is a sad fact that the founder of the Cabildo and of our great Charity Hospital, the first patron of female education in the State, is not only seldom spoken of, but the memory of his benefits has not even been perpetuated by naming a street in his honor. The church alone still piously cherishes the memory of her benefactor, and, from time to time, the tolling of her bells proclaims through the ages her eternal gratitude.



CHAPTER III.

PÈRE ANTOINE.

A MUCH DISPUTED CHARACTER--THE TRIBUNAL OF THE HOLY INQUISITION IN LOUISIANA—HUMILITY AND CHARITY OF PÈRE ANTOINE—A POMPOUS FUNERAL.

The Saint Louis Cathedral, so nobly erected and adorned by Don Andres Almonester y Roxas, was destined to be administered during the first thirty years of its existence by a man who more than all others impressed his individuality upon these times and whose name, to this day, is mentioned with veneration and love throughout the old French section.

Perhaps the memory and the deeds of no man have been more variously discussed, analyzed, criticised or eulogized than that of Father Antoine.

Many have been the disputes over the character of this wonderful priest, for wonderful was he to have left a name which, despite all criticisms, stands out as one of the sweetest, truest and most benevolent in the annals of Old New Orleans.

By some he is celebrated as a saint, a rival of the hermits of Thebaïs, a gold hearted man whose charity was only equaled by his profound humility. Others cannot find words harsh enough with which to brand his alleged ignorance and ambition. But by a faithful comparison of the traditions concerning Father Antoine with the old records of the Cathedral archives, which have never yet been published, it seems that Father Antoine deserved neither the great indignities with which some have sought to besmirch his memory, nor the excessive honor and praise with which others have crowned him.

This man, a monk of the Capuchin Order, was Antoine Ildefonso Moreno y Arze, born on the 18th of November, 1748, at Sedella, in the Kingdom of Grenada, and more familiarly known as "Père Antoine." In his early youth he entered the religious order of the Capuchins, and upon completing his studies he received the degree of Doctor in Divinity, a striking proof of the fact that he was a man of profound learning and not the illiterate product of ignorance that some claimed him to be.

In 1779, Father Antoine, in company with a few others of his order, landed in New Orleans. These Capuchins came to fill the vacancies caused by the death or the departure of the French monks of their order. That purpose was not only religious, but educational; the country being since ten years a

colony of Spain, they did great work in spreading the Spanish language and a knowledge of Spanish customs.

Father Antoine's zeal and brilliant talents brought him into prominence, and a few years after his landing he became rector of the Saint Louis Church of New Orleans, at this time the only parish of the city and the most important of the twelve or fifteen churches scattered throughout Louisiana.

The rectorship of Saint Louis Church, which would seem so desirable, did not prove a bed of roses for Father Antoine. All sorts of troubles and disputes arose, and for many years Father Antoine fought his battles. He never knew from day to day what the morrow would bring forth, and it was only during the last years of his life that he breathed peacefully, entirely absorbed in works of charity and devotion to his flock.

* * *

In the first place, Father Antoine had to deal with the civil authorities on account of the Inquisition, of which he had been appointed the Commissary on the 5th of December, 1788. His appointment as head of the Holy Inquisition in Louisiana caused him so much anxiety and sorrow that he kept it secret, and it was only in the beginning of the following year that he concluded to apprise Governor Miro of the fact by placing before him his commission and instructions, which he had received from Spain.

"It is an historical fact," says Mr. H. C. Castellanos, in his 'New Orleans As It Was,' "that wherever Spain exercised dominion, the peculiar institutions of

the mother country were engrafted upon the colony. So, by the mere transfer of Louisiana from France to Spain, the Inquisition became ipso facto incorporated into its political machinery, and is extensively spoken of in the ‘Bando de Gobierno,’ issued by O'Reilly on the 25th of November, 1769.

“The principal object of the institution of the tribunal of the ‘Santa Hermandad,’ being to repress disorder and to prevent the robberies and assassinations committed in unfrequented places by vagabonds and delinquents who conceal themselves in the woods, from which they sally forth and attack travelers and the neighboring inhabitants, the Alcade Mayor Provincial, shall assemble a sufficient number of brothers of the Santa Hermandad to clear his jurisdiction of the perpetrators of such evil deeds, by pursuing them with spirit, seizing or putting them to death.”

Now if we bear in mind that Father Antoine landed in New Orleans in 1779, the charge upon him of introducing the Inquisition falls naturally to the ground. The Inquisition preceded Father Antoine in Louisiana by ten years, and, far from being the originator of that so much hated institution, he has been its only victim, as this part of the governmental machinery remained merely nominal and was generally ignored by the people.

Still, to give effect to the mission entrusted to his fidelity, Father Antoine requested the Governor to furnish him with a posse, as the secular arm was necessary to enforce the law, and there began a most serious entanglement of affairs, which to this day remains in many ways unexplained, and which has been often misjudged and misunderstood. A simple,



Photo B. de Villentroy.

From an Old Painting.

PÈRE ANTOINE DE SEDEELA.

manly refusal would have sufficed to strike the proceeding with nullity, but the Governor followed a different course. He received the friar with apparent cordiality, promised to grant him his request, while at the very time he was planning the ruin of his unsuspecting countryman. Within twenty-four hours after the interview a platoon of soldiers filed into the bedroom of Father Antoine and forcibly carried him out to a ship about to sail for Cadiz. Governor Miro, in a special report to the Court of Spain, dated June 3, 1789, explained the whole affair as follows: "When I read the communication of that Capuchin I shuddered. The mere mention of the Inquisition uttered in New Orleans would be sufficient not only to check immigration, which is successfully progressing, but would also be capable of driving away those who have recently come, and I even fear that, in spite of my having sent out of the country Father Sedella, the most frightful consequences may ensue from the mere suspicion of the cause of his dismissal."

These are the facts of the whole transaction, and it is upon them that some writers do not hesitate to lay on Father Antoine this most hideous accusation of having introduced the Inquisition in Louisiana. This charge, which is a mere calumny, needed only this plain statement of facts to be utterly refuted.

* * *

Father Antoine came back to New Orleans in the spring of 1791, after an absence of two years, with the title of Honorary Preacher to His Most Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain. For the ten years following we lose sight of this marvelous character, and

the quiet and unobtrusive life he must have led is the best proof of how little thought he had of ever forcing the Inquisition in Louisiana.

Many years have passed, and the calm, deliberate recital of historical facts gleaned from the most reliable authorities brings out the character of Father Antoine in its true light.

If they do not entirely exonerate him from having taken an active part in the sad dissensions of his time, if a dispassionate reader could expect a different line of conduct from a man who had pledged his life to obedience and self-denial, it would be nevertheless unjust to lay upon him any blame. Whosoever says that he was an ambitious man for whom everything was a means towards self-advancement, proves by this imputation only a sad ignorance of the private life of Father Antoine.

It would not indeed be an easy task to reconcile these charges with Father Antoine's proverbial reputation for asceticism and his no less admirable charity and, above all, with the deep veneration with which even now his memory is regarded. He lived like an anchorite, though dwelling in the central part of the city. In the rear of the old Saint Louis Cathedral he built himself a simple hermitage. It was a hut of planks and boughs, much more uncomfortable than a dog kennel, and much more exposed to weather than a cow shed. It had no furniture but a bed, made of two hard boards, a stool and a holy water font. But here the good priest slept and ate and prayed; blessing God alike whether it rained or froze. Although at his death he left little or nothing, his income must certainly have been large; for he

never visited a scene of birth, of marriage, or of death, without receiving some gift; and his daily visits were many. His charity, however, was greater than his income; and his purse, like that of the fairy tale, was being forever emptied, though fresh gold always glittered there in the place of that taken out. This purse, tradition says, was a great bag filled with clinking coin and carried at the girdle. Whenever Father Antonio appeared upon the street the children of the French quarter followed after him. They would always kneel down beside him in the mud to ask for his blessing when opportunity offered, and they never failed to demand that a lagniappe, (*) in the shape of a small coin, be thrown in with the blessing. It is probable that they cared much more for the lagniappe than they did for the blessing; but the good father never refused either.

Fully occupied as he was with his ministry and charitable works, he never cared for the temporal administration of the parish affairs. This management remained entrusted to the wardens, and Father Antoine left them such freedom in the financial administration that they finally believed that they were the true owners of the church properties, which they could dispose of according to their own will and pleasure.

The man who cared so little for worldly goods was equally disinterested as regards public honors. In

(*) *Lagniappe*: A word of Spanish patois signifying a bonus, something in kind given by storekeepers in the French quarter after purchasing articles. Lagniappe consisted of candy or pecans, and in the case of Father Antoine it might have been a few cents.

the warden's minutes we read a letter from Father Antoine to the Bishop of Baltimore, which acquaints us with an event which up to now has remained unknown. Having heard that some members of the clergy and laity had applied to Rome in order to have him appointed Bishop of Louisiana, Father Antoine declared to the Bishop of Baltimore that he would not consider for a moment such a proposition, that he was unworthy of such an honor, and too old to do any good. Consequently he would be very grateful to the Bishop if he were to cut short any further efforts in that direction.

Father Antoine remained until his death what he wished to be: a monk devoted to charity, chastity and obedience. In his cabin he was more influential than the constituted authorities of the government, richer than those who extended to him their charities, and as such loved by his flock as the most zealous priest could wish to be.

He died on the 22d of January, 1829, and his burial was more of a triumph than of a funeral.

* * *

The body of this revered patriarch, says the *Louisiana Advertiser*, the spiritual father of the past and the present generation, remained exposed in the building where the Catholic vestry holds its meetings, Orleans street, from Monday, the day of his decease, till yesterday, when it was transferred to the church. During that time, a crowd of people of all ages, sexes and colors flocked to pay their last tribute of respect to him, whom, when alive, they regarded as their guide, their father and friend.

Father Antoine's features had preserved their mild and placid expression. Death had dealt gently with him and laid a soft hand upon him. He seemed like a saint rapt in holy meditation, nothing in his countenance indicating the ravages of sickness and the approach of decay. The silent tears, the sob of anguish, the prayer of the good, the blessing of the poor attested that a whole life devoted to deeds of charity and virtue had received its only appropriate earthly recompense — the sincere regrets of a grateful people.

Early on Thursday morning the firing of a cannon announced that his venerable remains were about to be removed to their last abode. Both Houses of the Legislature, in accordance with public sentiment, had resolved to adjourn for that day and to assist at the interment. The Court of Justice, on the motion of Mr. Livingston, the oldest member of the bar, had adopted a similar determination. The City Council also had passed the resolution of Mr. Laverty, declaring that its members would join the procession and wear crepe for thirty days.

The Cathedral was dressed in the insignia of deep mourning. A splendid catafalque, surmounted with lofty white feathers, stood on the right. Opposite the main altar an elevated platform had been erected, surrounded with steps and covered with black cloth. On the angles of the structure and on all the steps, lighted tapers were placed. On the right, under the altar consecrated to Saint Francis, at whose shrine the deceased had daily for half a century paid his devotions, the grave, destined to receive whatever of him was mortal, stood open.

The Louisiana Legion and the Lafayette Riflemen were drawn up in front of the church, the main portal of which was hung with black drapery, surmounted with the following inscription, admirable alike for its conciseness, its energy of expression and the purity of its Latin :



PATRI
ANTONIO DE SEDELLA
SACM.
LONGEVUS QUAMVIS OCCUBUERIS
INGENS TAMEN NOBIS
TUI DESIDERIUM
RELIQUISTI.

which we attempted to translate as follows :

SACRED TO
FATHER ANTONIO DE SEDELLA.
ALTHOUGH THOU HAST FALLEN FULL OF YEARS,
YET THOU HAST LEFT OUR HEARTS
FILLED WITH MIGHTY
SORROW.

The executive officers of the State, the members of the Legislature, the judges, the members of the City Council, the municipal officers, the gentlemen of the bar, the foreign consuls, and a vast multitude of citizens of all denominations filled the church to overflowing. Father Moni, the successor

of the deceased in his clerical functions and in the affection of his flock, officiated at the altar, surrounded by the whole body of the Catholic clergy of this and of the neighboring parishes. The solemn effect of the high mass on the crowd was enhanced by the grief depicted on the visages of the priests and the choristers, and every heart seemed to respond to the mournfully touching strains of the music poured forth from the galleries above.

When the mass was finished and the music paused, Father Manhault ascended the pulpit. He was eloquent without attempting to be so; for all that he said went to the heart of his hearers; he was the mere interpreter of every one's thoughts; he did not panegyris, he had nothing to extenuate, nothing to palliate; he drew a faithful picture of an original impressed on every mind; he spoke of the virtues of the departed, of his humanity, of his indulgences to others, his severity to himself, of his universal good will towards men, and when he concluded by entreating all present to comply with the last request of the dying saint, "that all his flock should join in prayer that his soul might soon rest in bliss," we are persuaded that fervent aspirations to that effect went forth to the Throne of Grace from the whole assembled multitude.

The coffin containing the corpse was borne off on the shoulders of four young men surrounded by eight pall bearers, friends of the deceased, and the procession moved from the church in the following order

The Legion,
The Catholic Clergy,
The Corpse,
Physicians of the Deceased,
The Church Wardens,
The Governor and Secretary of State,
The President and Members of the Senate,
The Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives,
The Judges of the Supreme Court,
The Judges of the District, Criminal and Parish Courts,
The Judges of the City Court,
Foreign Consuls,
The Mayor and Recorder,
The Members of the City Council,
Clergy of Different Denominations,
Members of the Bar,
Citizens.

It proceeded down Condé street to Main street, down Main to Royal, up Royal to St. Louis, thence to Chartres street, and down Chartres to the Cathedral, where two discourses were pronounced in commemoration of the virtues of the deceased, one in the Spanish, the other in the English language.

The time now arrived for depositing beneath the sod the earthly envelope of the departed spirit. Here ends our task. It is beyond our power to describe the closing scene, nor have we a language to express the deep and solemn sensations experienced by all around when the earth was thrown over what had so lately been animated by as pure a soul as ever dwelt in a human body.

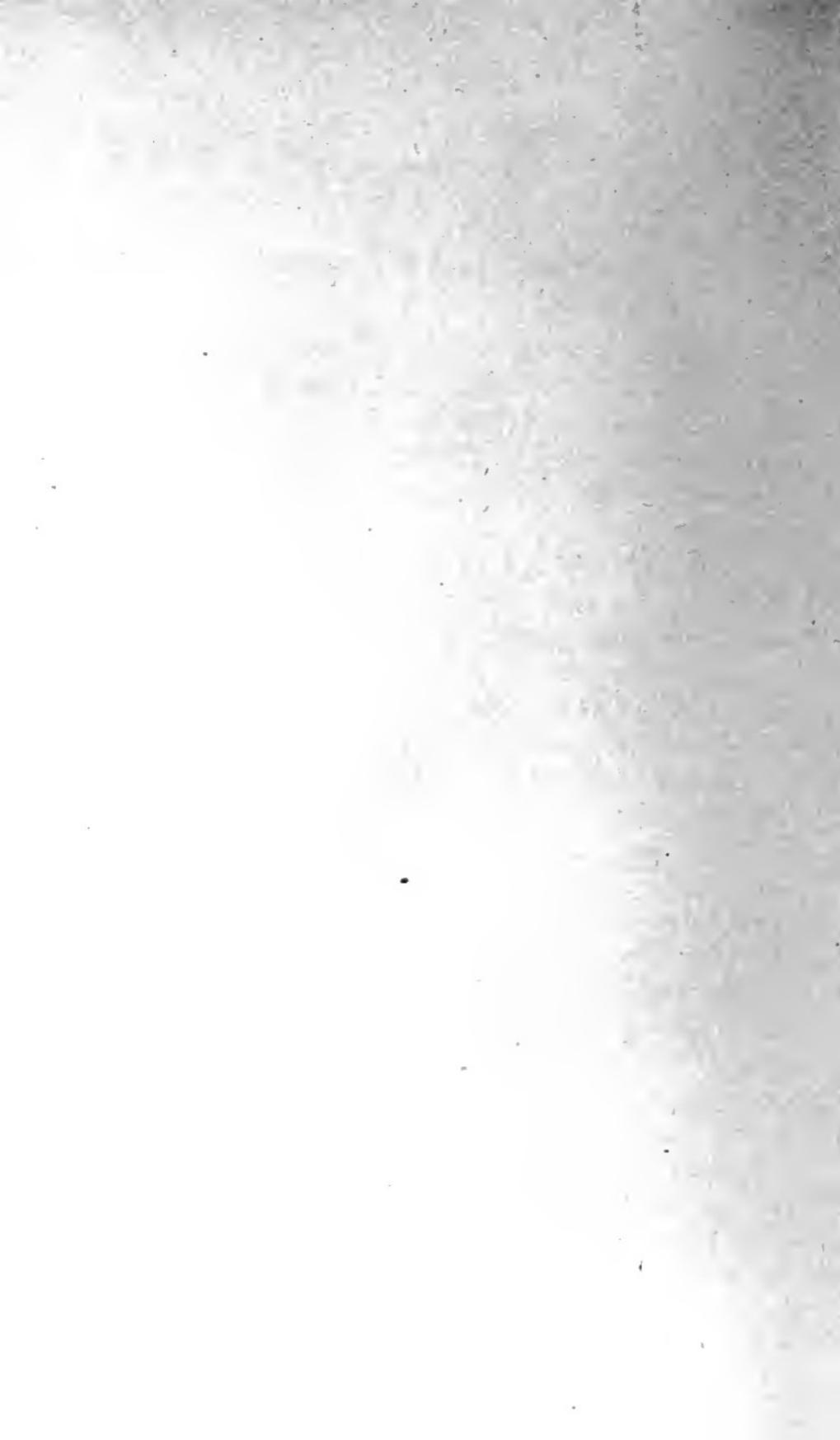
These words remain the verdict of history as regards Father Antoine, and time brought to his glorious memory the last vindication. On the 29th

of November, 1885, the Saint Louis Cathedral was adorned as on a feast day, and the centenary of the appointment of Father Antoine de Sedella to the Saint Louis Parish Church of New Orleans was pompously celebrated in presence of many bishops and of the diplomatic corps. The Rev. T. Pla pronounced the panegyric of the deceased, and recalled from the ages the memory of "Père Antoine," to whom he did not fear to apply these words of the Psalmist: "The memory of the just shall be in everlasting remembrance, and the words of evil-doers shall not hurt him."



PART II.

THE SAINT LOUIS
CATHEDRAL.



CHAPTER I.

IN COMING DOWN A CENTURY.

The Saint Louis Cathedral, erected by Don Andres Almonester y Roxas, and since its very beginning made famous by its first rector, Father Antoine, did not pass through a century without feeling the destructive touch of time, nor the improving hand of man.

Towards 1814, under the direction of architect Laborde, its side towers were crowned with low spires and the top of its facade ornamented with four gigantic firecones of granite. Ten years later the architect Le Riche erected a belfry in the center of the facade, to match with the side towers.

Thus thoroughly completed, the Cathedral remained nearly intact until 1850. A city guide, issued in 1845, gives the following description of this edifice after its completion: "The architecture of the Cathedral is by no means pure, but is not wanting in effect on this account. The lower story is of the rustic order, flanked at each of the front angles by hexagonal towers and adorned with pilasters of plain masonry and two clustered tuscan columns on either side of the main entrance. The second story of the front has the same general appearance as the lower one, but is of the Roman Doric order. On the apex of its pediment rises the principal turret, built in two parts; a lower part, square, about twenty feet in height, with circular apertures on each side, and the

upper part hexagonal, used as a belfry. This belfry became the city watch tower at the request of the Mayor, and each night a sentinel was stationed within to give the alarm in case of fire."

CHAPTER II.

A "TE DEUM" OF VICTORY.

The most elaborate and grandiose ceremony ever held in the Saint Louis Cathedral before its partial reconstruction, in 1850, was a solemn Thanksgiving, celebrated on the 23d of January, 1815, in honor of the glorious victory of General Jackson over the British forces of General Pakenham. We quote from Gayarré:

"All the citizens, whatever their religious creed was, joined their exertions to make that festival as impressive as it was in their power. In front of the Cathedral, in the middle of that square which is now known as Jackson Square, and where the equestrian statue of the hero commemorates his fame and the gratitude of Louisiana, a triumphal arch was temporarily erected. It was supported by six columns. On the right was a young woman with the attributes of Justice, which she represented, and another, on the left, personated the Goddess of Liberty. Under the arch, two beautiful boys, looking as though they were angels dropped from heaven on the pedestals on

From a Drawing in Howard Library.

THE CATHEDRAL VIEWED FROM THE RIVER ABOUT 1810.

Photo C. M. C.



which they stood, held, each in his tiny hand, a crown of laurels. From the arch to the church, at proper intervals, were ranged young ladies representing the different States and Territories of the American Union. They were all dressed in white, and covered with transparent veils. A silver star glittered on their foreheads. Each one held in her right hand a flag on which was inscribed the name of the State she represented, and in her left a basket of flowers trimmed with blue ribbons. Behind each was a shield appended to a lance stuck in the ground, and inscribed with the name of a State or a Territory. These shields were linked together with verdant festoons, and formed a kind of lane from the triumphant arch to the gray towers of the time honored Cathedral. In the rear on both sides, and extending from the entrance of the square, which faced the river to the church, was a glittering avenue of bayonets formed by the uniformed companies of Planché's Battalion, and back of them, in every direction, surged and undulated like a sea of human beings the immense multitude assembled to witness the pageantry of the day.

“The boom of artillery and a burst of military music announced the approach of the hero. The air was rent with acclamations, and the hands of beauty waved handkerchiefs and flags from the adjacent buildings, which were crowded with eager spectators. As General Jackson passed under the triumphal arch he was crowned by the two youthful genii, who expected him on their pedestals, and was congratulated in an address delivered by the girl who personated the State of Louisiana. Then, as he proceeded to the

church, the other States and Territories gracefully bowed their heads to him, each waving her flag, and strewing his path with flowers. At the door of the Cathedral he met Abbé Dubourg with all his clergy. That venerable personage addressed him in these terms, so well suited to the occasion and to the sacred character of the ceremony :

“ ‘‘General : Whilst the State of Louisiana, in the joyful transports of her gratitude, hails you as her deliverer and the asserter of her menaced liberties ; whilst grateful America, so lately wrapped up in anxious suspense on the fate of this important city, the emporium of the wealth of one-half of her territory, and the true bulwark of her independence, is now re-echoing from shore to shore your splendid achievements, and preparing to inscribe your name on her immortal rolls among those of her Washingtons ; whilst history, poetry, and the monumental arts will vie in consigning to the admiration of the latest posterity a triumph perhaps unparalleled in their records ; whilst thus raised by universal acclamation to the very pinnacle of fame, and surrounded with ascend-

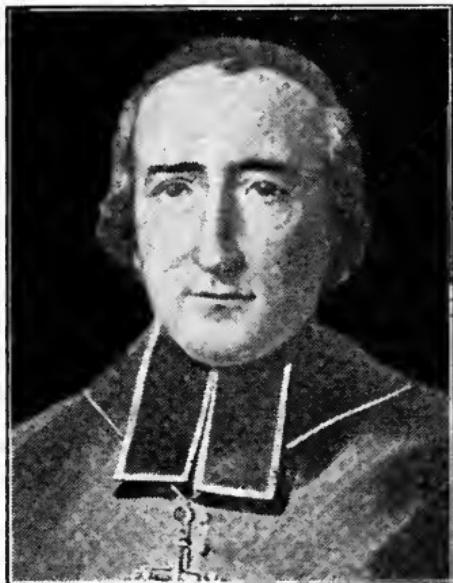


Photo C. M. C. From an Old Painting.

ABBÉ GUILLAUME V. DUBOURG.

ing clouds of incense, how easy it had been for you, General, to forget the Prime Mover of your wonderful success, and to assume to yourself a praise which must essentially return to that exalted source whence every sort of merit is derived ! But, better acquainted with the nature of true glory, and justly placing the summit of your ambition in approving yourself the worthy instrument of Heaven's merciful designs, the first impulse of your religious heart was to acknowledge the signal interposition of Providence; your first step is a solemn display of your humble sense of His favors.

“ Still agitated at the remembrance of those dreadful agonies from which we have been so miraculously rescued, it is our duty also to acknowledge that the Almighty has truly had the principal hand in our deliverance, and to follow you, General, in attributing to His infinite goodness the homage of our unfeigned gratitude. Let the infatuated votary of a blind chance deride our credulous simplicity ; let the cold-hearted atheist look up for the explanation of such important events to the mere concatenation of human causes ; to us the whole universe is loud in proclaiming a Supreme Ruler, who, as he holds the hearts of man in his hands, holds also the thread of all contingent occurrences. “ Whatever be His intermediate agents,” says an illustrious prelate, “ still on the secret orders of His all-ruling providence depend the rise and prosperity, as well as the decline and downfall of empires. From His lofty throne above He moves every scene below, now curbing, now letting loose the passions of men; now infusing His own wisdom into the leaders of nations; now confounding,

their boasted prudence, and spreading upon their councils a spirit of intoxication, and thus executing his uncontrollable judgments on the sons of men according to the dictates of His own unerring justice."

"To him, therefore, our most fervent thanks are due for our late unexpected rescue, and it is Him we chiefly intend to praise, when considering you, General, as *the man of his right hand*, whom he has taken pains to fit out for the important commission of our defense. We extol that fecundity of genius by which, in circumstances of the most discouraging distress, you created unforeseen resources, raised as it were from the ground hosts of intrepid warriors, and provided every vulnerable point with ample means of defense. To Him we trace that instinctive superiority of your mind, which alone rallied around you universal confidence, impressed one irresistible movement to all the jarring elements of which this political machine is composed, aroused their slumbering spirits, and diffused through every rank that noble ardor which glowed in your own bosom. To Him, in fine, we address our acknowledgments for that consummate prudence which defeated all the combinations of a sagacious enemy, entangled him in the very snares which he had spread before us, and succeeded in effecting his utter destruction, without hardly exposing the lives of our citizens. Immortal thanks be to His Supreme Majesty, for sending us such an instrument of His bountiful designs! A gift of that value is the best token of the continuance of His protection—the most solid encouragement to us to sue for new favors. The first which it emboldens us humbly to supplicate, as it is the nearer to our throb-

bing hearts, is that you may long enjoy, General, the honors of your grateful country, of which you will permit us to present you a pledge in this wreath of laurel, the prize of victory, the symbol of immortality, The next is a speedy and honorable termination of the bloody contest in which we are engaged. No one has so efficaciously labored as you, General, for the acceleration of that blissful period. May we soon reap the sweetest frnit of your splendid and uninterrupted victories !'

"The General, having received the wreath of laurel from the apostolic hands of the speaker, made this modest and felicitous reply:

"Reverend Sir, I receive with gratitude and pleasure the symbolical crown which piety has prepared. I receive it in the name of the brave men who have so effectually seconded my exertions for the preservation of their country. They well deserve the laurels their country will bestow.

"For myself, to have been instrumental in the deliverance of such a country, is the greatest blessing that Heaven could confer. That it has been effected with so little loss, that so few tears should cloud the smiles of our triumph, and not a eypress leaf be interwoven in the wreath which you present, is a source of the most exquisite enjoyment.

"I thank you, Reverend Sir, most sincerely, for the prayers which you offer up for my happiness. May those your patriotism dictates for our beloved country be first heard, and may mine for your individual prosperity, as well as that of the congregation committed to your care, be favorably received ! The prosperity, the wealth, the happiness of this city will

then be commensurate with the courage and other qualities of its inhabitants.' ”

CHAPTER III.

THE SAINT LOUIS CATHEDRAL OF OUR DAYS.

In 1850 the principal tower of the Cathedral collapsed, and it was discovered that notwithstanding the solidity with which the edifice had been originally put up, the walls were becoming insecure. Large cracks had made their appearance on the front and sides, and in consequence, the upper portion was torn down and a new design was suggested by Louis Pilié, a city surveyor, and adopted by the wardens. On the same occasion the Cathedral was enlarged by the addition of the present sanctuary and vestries, and brought up to its present size and appearance. The interior of the sacred edifice was ornamented with beautiful biblical scenes by artists whose names have not been handed down to us, but whose marvellous delicacy of execution evolved masterpieces that the hand of time has effaced.

The Cathedral, newly repaired, enlarged and adorned, was blessed on the 7th of December, 1851, by Archbishop Blanc, assisted by Bishop Chandré, of Natchez, and Bishop Portier, of Mobile.

* * *

Some forty years afterwards, although the paintings remained quite distinct, there were some whose colors needed refreshing, while others had become antiquated and required to be replaced by newer subjects more in accordance with the taste and the ideas of our time. The church building itself was in need of reparation; the side galleries, portions of the flooring, and here and there parts of the woodwork were showing too plainly the marks of decay.

Archbishop Janssens and Father Mignot (*) were pondering what to do when a thunderstorm, on a morning of October, 1891, brought about a solution. The lightning had struck the main tower of the church, and after making a large hole, about three feet in diameter, came down an iron rod, thence leaped on to the grand organ, demolishing several reeds, and after pushing the minute hand of the clock over the choir railing, sought the earth through a hole bored in the pavement.

The ladies of the congregation broached a plan for raising the necessary money, not only to repair the damage done by the lightning, but also to pay for the extensive improvements which Father Mignot desired so much to make. When funds sufficient to begin the work of decoration and of repairs were

(*) Quite innocently the author was on the point of neglecting to mention the late Father Mignot, but the kindness and charity of the beloved departed priest were so graciously recalled to him that he hastened to insert the features of this generous man, deplored only that his short sojourn in New Orleans did not give him the opportunity to echo in a more deserving place the vivid veneration in which is held, throughout the French quarter, the memory of "Good Father Mignot."



VERY REV. H. MIGNOT.

realized, Father Mignot summoned Mr. Erasmus Hembrecht, an artist who had made his reputation in church decoration. A contract was drawn up and signed, and for many days the interior of the Cathedral was a maze of platforms and scaffoldings. An army of workmen were engaged in making the necessary repairs, but Mr. Hembrecht reserved for himself the most difficult and delicate part of the improvements. He retouched, repainted and altered some of the paintings on the vault and above the lateral chapels, and obliterated a few of the old pictures, replacing them with subjects of his own creation.

This artist entirely changed the coloring of walls and friezes, and colonades. For the too glaring tones which prevailed and which offended the artistic eye, he substituted friezework and light colors of tender hue, mellow gold, pale green and delicate blue, which he so skillfully arranged and blended that the interior of the church reflects with soft radiance the floods of light that pour through the many lateral windows.

One of the striking effects of the artist's skill is the altered appearance of the numerous colonades which support the lateral galleries and the vaults. These columns were round, and had an appearance of solidity and massiveness, not in keeping with the graceful, airy aspect of the rest of the building. By most clever contrast of shading and wonderful juxtaposition of colors, the artist has given the columns the appearance of being fluted, thus relieving them of their solid, ponderous appearance, and giving them an air of slenderness and grace.

Finally, a couple of years ago, in 1905, through

the solicitude of the present rector, Monsignore J. M. Laval, the whole exterior of the building was re-cemented and the interior was adorned with three rich chandeliers of brass and stations of the cross, delicately painted in “terra cotta.”



CHAPTER IV.

FOR VISITORS' SAKE.

COSMOPOLITAN CHARACTER OF A CONGREGATION—THE SWISS GUARD—A GLIMPSE OF THE ALTARS, PAINTINGS AND STAINED GLASS WINDOWS—THE ABODE OF ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD.

There is no place in New Orleans that affords better opportunity for studying the cosmopolitanism of this city than the Saint Louis Cathedral. Within the parish limits live the representatives of more than ten nations. Americans, French, English, Irish, Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Syrians, Slavonians and even Malays and Filipinos come to worship in this church.

In the transactions of daily life, it is hard sometimes to distinguish them: traffic is the most important factor in the unity of a nation made up of different races and languages; but in church every one prefers to pray in his mother tongue, and nothing is dearer to his heart than the religious ceremonies of his mother country performed in a remote land.

Come in the early morning when the dim light of

day gives to the solitude of the church an air of mysticism and you will witness the humble and fervent prayer of the sturdy sons of old Christian countries, like Ireland and Slavonia, that suffered and bled for the defense of their faith.

Often unnoticed by the generality as they stand in the rear of the church, but exciting a peculiar interest among keen observers, are the old women that gather around the confessionals. They are mostly Syrians or Sicilians, and wear the costume of their native country. They pray, raising their arms upwards in the attitude of the antique statues called "Orantes." Some of them spend hours in prayer, kneeling thus on the pavement, then they make the tour of the church and come back to the same place, to mutter the same prayer.

Nothing, perhaps, could give a better idea of this cosmopolitanism so characteristic of the "Old Carré" than a visit to the parochial school conducted by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, on Saint Ann Street. Among the one hundred and fifty children that attend this school not less than ten nations are represented.

Within the last decade the congregation of the Saint Louis Cathedral changed its character. Up to this time this church was still considered one of the most aristocratic. The elite of the old Creole families still resided within its limits, and on certain feasts there were gatherings in the Saint Louis Cathedral that could not be witnessed elsewhere. Nothing to be compared with such distinguished attendance could be seen in our days except on special occasions when the Archbishop officiates solemnly at the altar.



Photo C. M. C.
A COSMOPOLITAN GROUP.

Then the church resumes its air of ancient grandeur, and amidst the throngs of people that fill the nave and the galleries to their utmost capacity, it does not take long to distinguish the last descendants of those who once formed the unique element of the congregation. Nothing is more to be regretted than this gradual exodus of the old Creole families from the French section of the city.

The ancient Creoles of New Orleans were noted the world over for the gallantry and urbanity of the men, the exquisite grace and artistic taste of the women, their elegant and cultured homes, which made the Cathedral Parish a marked center of refinement and education. The removal of so many of these old families to new and more progressive sections of the city marks the passing away of a typical epoch of New Orleans life, and the Saint Louis Cathedral cannot too deeply deplore its abandonment in this day by those whose forefathers it sheltered when chivalry and romance bloomed in Louisiana.

* * *

There is a man who seems to sum up in himself the antiquity and cosmopolitanism of the Saint Louis Cathedral; a man who knows everybody and is known by all; a man who for more than twenty years has been as much an integral part of the Cathedral as are its walls and pillars.

Neither time nor the inclemency of the weather have caused him to neglect his daily duty; the old Cathedral seems to have imparted to him something of its immutability.

This man, humble and meek, is, or rather, will



Photo B. de Villentroy.

THE SWISS GUARD IN FULL REGALIA.

mark the end of an epoch. He is the Swiss guard, and very likely will be the last of the long series of the Swiss guards who, from the time of the very foundation of the church, preceded the religious processions, presenting a unique picture, with their cocked hats and red coats gorgeously ornamented with gold stripes.

Do not think him either haughty or surly, he is merely a man of duty, a man who does not stop to parley the orders he is given. Make any inquiries about the Cathedral and he will never be at a loss to answer, but do not ask him how it happened to him to don a military costume of the middle ages and handle a halberd. He was born for it; here ends his whole psychology.

* * *

The Saint Louis Cathedral is an historical landmark, but possesses none of these artistic characters or treasures that makes some European churches so famous all over the world. Although one hundred and fifteen years have elapsed since its erection, not an improvement made nor a donation received could appeal to the interest of a thorough connoisseur.

This church, however, is appropriately furnished and tastefully decorated. When the visitors cross its threshold and walk down the aisle to the choir railing, they find themselves in front of the high altar. It is a splendid piece of work imported from Belgium. The heavy table of white marble is supported by four caryatid angels and the frieze that adorns the upper part of the altar on which are placed the candlesticks has the slightness and deli-

eacy of embroidery. The tabernacle holds the middle of a rich canopy that is crowned by three statues personifying Faith, Hope and Charity. The statues on either side of the main altar are those of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

The side altar erected near the pulpit is dedicated to St. Francis of Assisium, whose picture is seen above, hung on the wall. The canopy of the altar supports a group representing the Apparition of Our Lord to the Blessed Marguerite Marie Alacoque which occurred in Paray le Monial (France) in the second part of the 17th century. Often people designate this altar after the Sacred Heart.

The other side altar is dedicated to the Virgin Mary under the title of Immaculate Conception. The rocks and panoramic view that cover the back ground of the chapel represent the famous shrine of Lourdes. There is seen a reproduction of one of the eighteen apparitions of the Virgin to a young girl named Bernadette Soubirous. It occurred in 1858, and since the place has gained a world wide fame. Pilgrims by hundreds of thousands visit it yearly and cures take place that give plain evidence of their supernatural character. The shrine of Lourdes is situated along a torrent and surrounded by high mountains that make of this spot one of the most picturesque in France.

* * *

Daylight illuminates the interior of the Cathedral through a double row of stained glass windows pierced on each side wall. Here is the list of the pictures that adorn the lower windows: commencing

at the front door of the church and going down the aisle towards the altar of Our Lady of Lourdes are representations of

Saint Dominic, born in Spain in 1170, died in 1221; he founded the Order of the Preaching Friars at Toulouse in 1215. His historians say that preceding his birth, his mother, whilst she was with child, dreamed that she brought forth a whelp which carried in its mouth a burning torch, with which it set the whole world in fire.

Saint Charles Borromeo was born in 1538, and died in 1584. He became archbishop of Milan and is known as a great reformer of the ecclesiastical discipline.

Saint Catherine died a martyr to the faith by the order of the Emperor Maximinus, in the fourth century.

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary is a representation of the Virgin as patroness of a religious association established in 1481 by Sixtus IV to ward off by the recitation of the Rosary the evils that threatened Christendom at the hands of the Turks.

Saint Vincent de Paul, a French priest who founded the Priests of the Mission known as the Lazarist Fathers and the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity known as Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul — 1576-1660.

Saint Ann (over the side porch), mother of the Virgin Mary.

On the opposite are the following pictures beginning with the nearest to the main entrance:

Saint Peter, the Prince of the Apostles and the

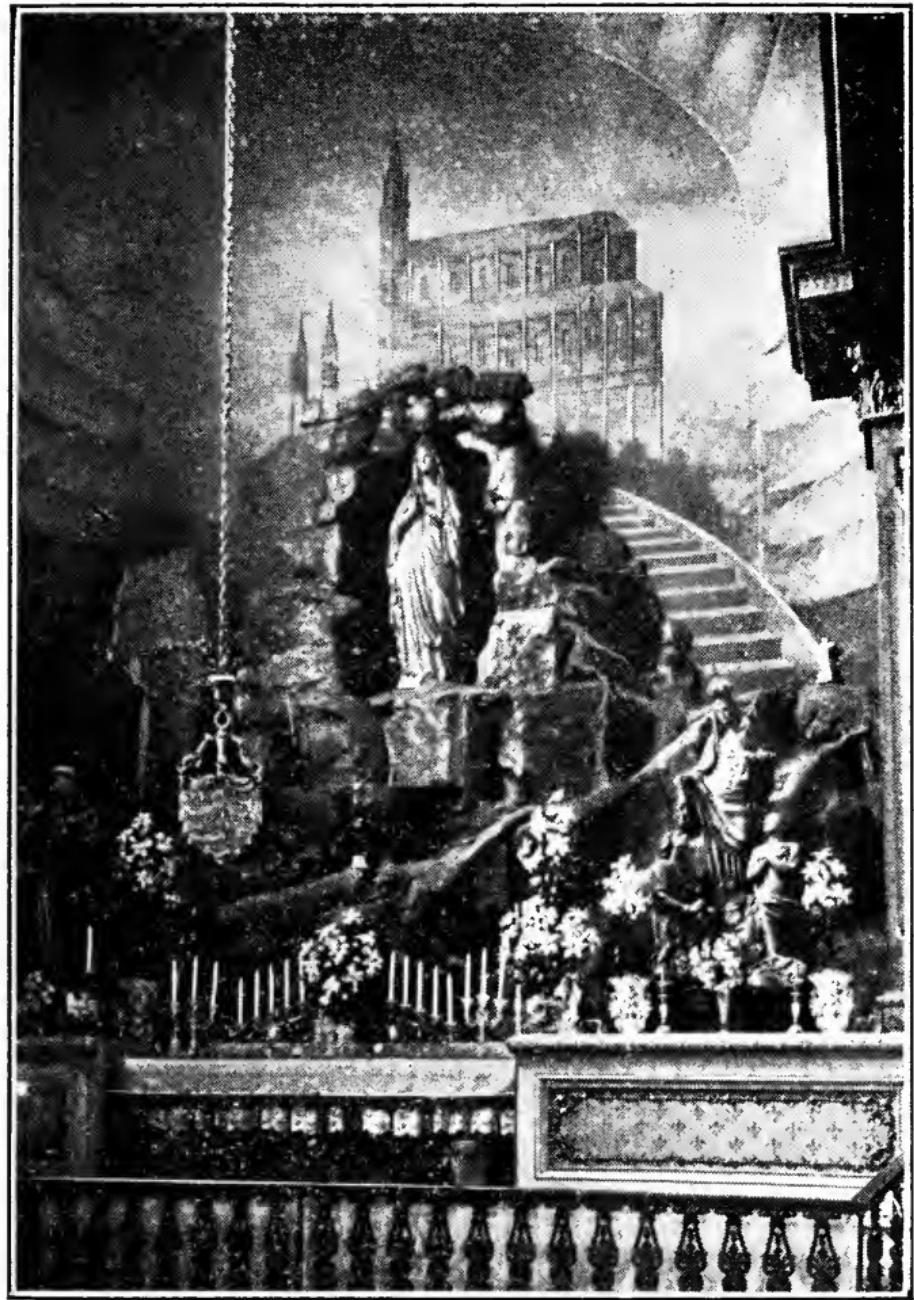


Photo B. de Villentroy.

ALTAR OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES.

first bishop of Rome where he suffered crucifixion in the year 65 A. D.

Saint Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, lived in the fifth century.

The Holy Family, the Infant Jesus, the Virgin Mary his mother and Saint Joseph, his foster father.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus, a picture of our Lord as He appeared to the Blessed Marguerite Marie Alacoque, a nun of the Order of the Visitation, 1647-1690.

Saint Francis of Assisium, founder of the Friars Minors, known as Franciscans, 1208.

Saint Louis, 1226-1270. A king of France, led the eighth crusade in Holy Land. This Cathedral is named after him, and the diocese of New Orleans is placed under his patronage.

* * *

The interior of the Saint Louis Cathedral is decorated with symbolical and historic pictures of great interest.

The principal pictures are: The very large-sized tableau, painted on the wall just above the main altar, representing Saint Louis, announcing the Crusade. There are many figures in this immense grouping, all of heroic size.

The next tableau that challenges admiration is painted on the vault exactly over the centre of the main aisle, and is entitled “Saint Peter receiving the Shepherd’s Staff from Our Lord.”

At stated distance from that beautiful picture are painted, in medallion, the four evangelists, Saint John, Saint Mark, Saint Luke and Saint Matthew.

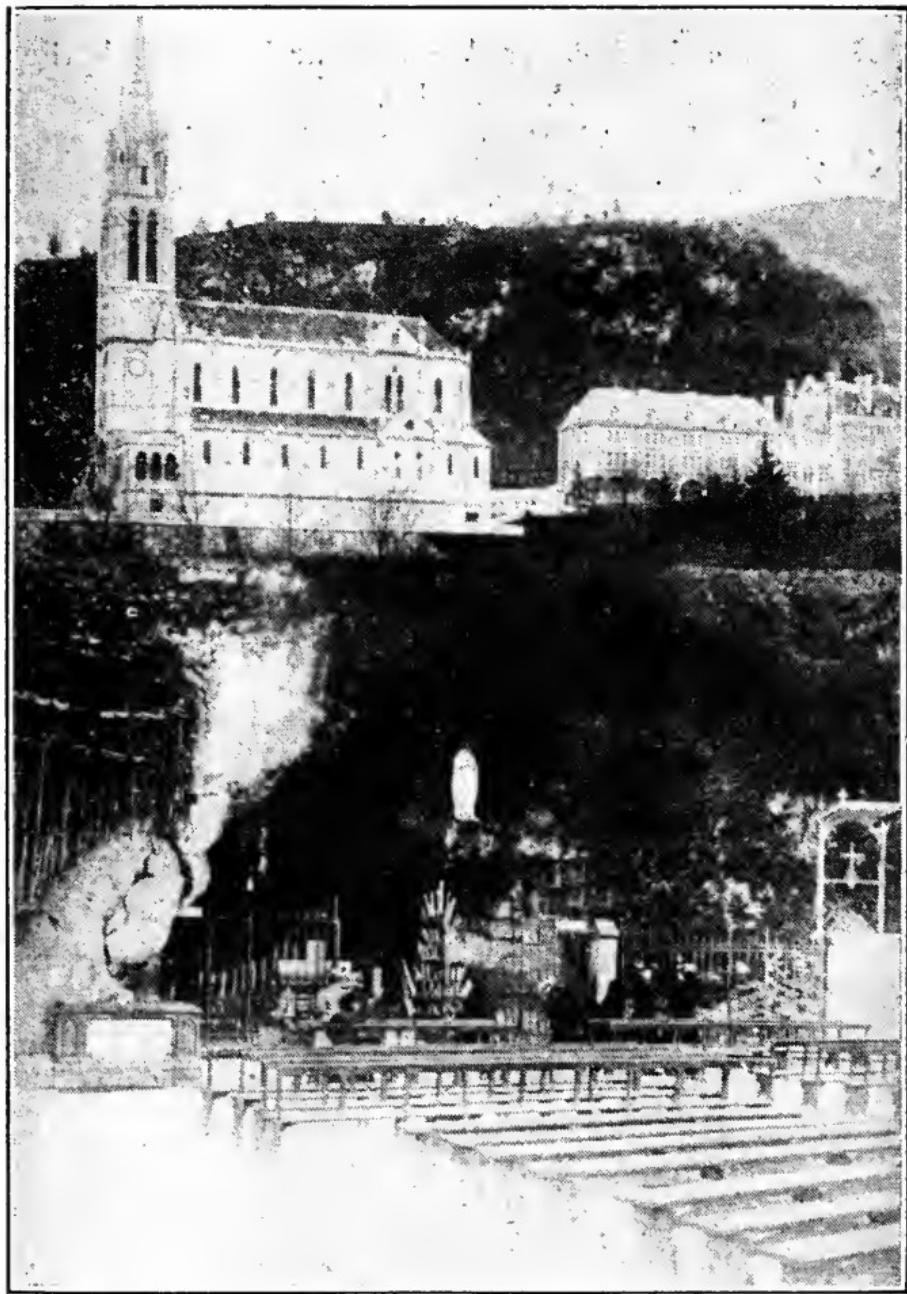


Photo C. M. C.

SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES.

Between each of the twelve side arches there is the portrait of one of the apostles.

Over the choir there is a very spirited representation of the archangel Michael, and at the other extremity, near the sanctuary, is "the Holy Family."

The vault of the sanctuary has a picture representing "The Sacrifice of the Divine Lamb."

Symbolical figures of the old and the new testaments are distributed, artistically in the arched vault.

The spaces over the lateral chapels are also very beautifully decorated. Over the altar of the Sacred Heart and of Saint Francis of Assisi (right aisle) there is a pathetic picture representing "The Agony of Our Lord." Christ is shown, kneeling in the Garden of Olives. His eyes are suffused with tears; the sweat of agony is upon his suffering face. In front of Him stands an angel bearing a cross, while directly over Christ, and enclosed within a golden halo, there effulges the "chalice of bitterness" which the Son of God has to drain to the very last drop.

Over the altar of Notre Dame de Lourdes (Our Lady of Lourdes) the "Annunciation" is depicted with true artistic effect and coloring. The Virgin Mary and the Angel Gabriel are painted in most natural pose and attitude. This picture, known to all scholars, is most beautifully executed, and the angel's lips seem about to formulate the respectful salutation: "Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, etc."

The work which has called forth the greatest admiration, is the allegorical tableau, just above the organ. This beautiful painting represents Saint



Photo E. Claudel.

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL.

Cecilia, the patron saint of music. She seems to be floating on a canopy of clouds, around and above her are a number of angelic figures, as it were the fleecy throne upon which Saint Cecilia sits. Below the painting there is a large scroll, ornamental, bearing in French an inscription which, translated, means : "Sing the praises of the Lord on reed and on string instruments."

* * *

The Saint Louis Cathedral, a temple of the Living God is at the same time the abode of illustrious dead. Under the flagstones of its sanctuary rest grand signors of the Old Regime and many of the prelates that occupied the glorious See of New Orleans.

On the epistle side, under the Chapel of the Sacred Heart was buried Don Andres Almonester y Roxas, founder of the Cathedral and the famous Father Antonio de Sedella, its first rector.

On the other side, under the Altar of Our Lady of Lourdes, rest three illustrious Chevaliers. Their tomb is marked by a large marble flag stone that bears their coat of arms and the following inscription :



ICI REPOSENT

FRANÇOIS PHILIPPE DE MARIGNY DE MANDEVILLE,

Chevalier de l'Ordre Royal et Militaire de Saint Louis et Major de Place à la Nouvelle-Orléans, né à Bayeux en Normandie, mort dans cette ville le 1er Novembre 1728.

ANTOINE PHILIPPE DE MARIGNY DE MANDEVILLE,

Chevalier de l'Ordre Royal et Militaire de Saint Louis et Capitaine d'Infanterie au service de France, né à la Mobile le 28 Février 1722, mort à la Nouvelle-Orléans le 6 Novembre 1779.

PIERRE PHILIPPE DE MARIGNY DE MANDEVILLE,

Chevalier de l'Ordre Royal et Militaire de Saint Louis, Capitaine d'Infanterie sous le Gouvernement Espagnol, né dans cette ville le 13 Juin 1757, et mort le 11 Mai 1800.

The same inscription is translated in English as follows:

HERE REST

FRANÇOIS PHILIPPE DE MARIGNY DE MANDEVILLE,

A Knight of the Royal and Military Order of Saint Louis, and Port Commandant at New Orleans, born at Bayeux, in Normandy, died in this city November 1, 1728.

ANTOINE PHILIPPE DE MARIGNY DE MANDEVILLE,

A Knight of the Royal and Military Order of Saint Louis, and Captain of Infantry in the service of France, born at Mobile February 28, 1772, died at New Orleans November 6, 1779.

PIERRE PHILIPPE DE MARIGNY DE MANDEVILLE,

A Knight of the Royal and Military Order of Saint Louis, Captain of Infantry under the Spanish Government, born in this city on June 13, 1757, and died on the 11th of May, 1800.

Others very likely have been buried side by side with these illustrious dead, but their names are unknown. Henry C. Castellanos says "that during the repairs of the Cathedral in 1850 the masons were compelled to disinter the remains of the dead buried at the foot of the Altar of Saint Francis, whence they were carried in wheelbarrows to the cart destined to convey them to the cemetery. Among these relics were the bones of Père Antoine now resting in the Priest's tomb in the Old Saint Louis Cemetery.

Under that new part of the Cathedral added in 1850 and covered now by the sanctuary and the sacristies, eight mortuary rooms were constructed, two at the foot of the high altar and two in each sacristy. Under the sanctuary, on the epistle side, was laid to rest the body of the sainted Archbishop Janssens, who died in 1897. The tomb was opened in May, 1908, and the casket found in perfect state of preservation.

On the gospel side of the sanctuary was buried the late Archbishop Chapelle, who died a victim of the yellow fever, the 9th of August, 1905. The same vault was previously occupied by the remains of Bishop Blanc, who died in 1860.

The tombs built under the sacristy near the Altar of Saint Francis have never been used. In the crypt under the floor of the second sacristy, two vaults out of six are closed. One contains the remains of Father Duquesnay, who died in 1858. In the other vault has been lately buried Right Reverend Gustave Rouxel, Auxiliary bishop of New Orleans. He died in March, 1908, and is the last of the prelates interred in the Saint Louis Cathedral.

CHAPTER V.

THE SAINT LOUIS CATHEDRAL ARCHIVES.

HOW THE RECORDS WERE HANDED DOWN—OLDEST ENTRIES
—TERRIBLE STORIES IN A FEW LINES—SIDE LIGHTS ON
CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE OF OLD.

Nothing seems to impress the visitor more than a peep at the old registers that sleep on the shelves of the Cathedral Archives. The covers darkened and mangled, the pages yellow and crumbling, the ink faded by time, tell more eloquently than words of the years that have glided away by scores, since the first entry was written in the musty records.

The Saint Louis Cathedral, and the Ursuline Convent, hide their age under a new coat of cement; the decaying tombs of the Old Saint Louis Cemetery sink slowly into the soft soil amidst tall herbs and dense shrubbery; the venerable registers of the Cathedral Archives alone bear openly the fateful touch of time. They are like remains freshly removed from the common tomb of the past generation. One cannot look upon them without thinking of those, who for two centuries trod the soil upon which we live, and who have long since passed away, leaving only a name slowly but surely fading with the years.

These precious records for a long time had their home in a small and dark room, situated on the ground floor of the St. Louis Cathedral Presbytery, in which the light penetrated through an iron barred window set quite low, and allowing the passerby to

catch a glimpse of its interior furnished with a couple of chairs, a table and rows upon rows of shelves filled with volumes bearing the venerable stamp of age.

A custodian takes care of these archives. "In fact," wrote James Augustin, "there always has been a quiet, mild mannered, unobtrusive, polite and obliging middle-aged gentleman in charge of these precious records. There have been changes of individuals, but not of manners, and when one of the venerable guardians goes to his eternal rest another takes his place, and placidly assumes the duties of the office."

The names of three keepers of these archives are still particularly remembered; they are Messrs. Dubue, Geo. De Jaham and Henry Ducatel. Mr. Dubuc was custodian so long ago that no one can exactly remember the time when he took possession of his charge. Geo. De Jaham, his successor, came on duty when the present generation was receiving baptism at the hands of Rev. Father Mignot; he remained in office until his death in 1893. Henry Ducatel, who was offered the place left vacant by Mr. De Jaham, had been baptized by the famous "Père Antoine." Henry Ducatel spent ten years of his youth at Paris in the College of Louis le Grand; then he returned to his country and engaged in business. He served through the Civil War as captain of artillery in the Gardes d'Orléans.

After Mr. Ducatel's death the position held for a while by a young man, was then given by Father Mignot to Mr. J. C. Renaud, the present incumbent.

The Saint Louis Cathedral Archives number at present 131 registers of different sizes and bindings.



Photo C. M. C.

THE CATHEDRAL ARCHIVES AND THEIR CUSTODIAN.

Seventy are consecrated to the white people, of which forty are records of baptisms, twenty of marriages and ten of burials.

Forty-one registers are devoted to the colored people, of which thirty record baptisms and five marriages. The books containing the burials of the colored people have not yet been properly classified, and lie amidst a heap of yellow and dusty papers relating to the administration of the Trustees of the Cathedral.

Though very numerous, the collection is not complete; some of the registers are missing and pages of others for various motives have been shrewdly torn off, but these constitute exceptions, and if we consider the lapse of time and the inevitable havoc it plays with everything, it must be acknowledged that the unity of the Cathedral archives has been wonderfully preserved, and the interest that arises from a close perusal of them is altogether unique and vividly interesting.

* * *

One of the oldest registers of the Archives of the Saint Louis Cathedral is in Paris among the colonial papers of the French Navy. I could not learn how it found its way there. A copy of it was ordered for the Historical Society of Louisiana by Professor Alcée Fortier, and can be found in the Tulane University Library. It opens with these words: "Register of those who died at the Old Fort of Biloxi during the administration of Mr. Danion, from the 8th of August, 1720, to the 4th of Setember, 1722."

Then follow these different extracts:

1. Extract from the registers of the Rev. Father De Viaudec, Capuchin and Missionary from the Chaptoulas to the Pointe Coupée.

2. Extract from the baptism registers of the Parish of Able Descas from May, 1723, to May, 1724.

3. Baptisms, marriages and burials held in the Chapel of the Fort of Chartres, Diocese of Quebec.

This precious register ends with the entries of burials for New Orleans from 1720 to 1734, but with many intermissions. Most of these ceremonies were performed by Fathers Raphael, Matthias de Sedan, Pierre, Philippe and Hyacinthe. Some of these entries are most eloquent in their brevity and make us think of the hardships and dangers of the early colonists of Louisiana. Here is one of them:

“In the year 1723, there was massacred, by the savages on the coast of Florida, a man named Cesar Soulard, whose fate we have heard from reliable witnesses.” Here indeed the dreadful story of this massacre is told in a few lines.

The register of the Saint Louis Cathedral Archives that contains the oldest entries is not the original, but a copy written by Father Antoine himself to replace the original registry, which was already “in a very bad condition,” as Père Antoine testifies. This precious copy opens under this heading:

“First register of marriages of the Saint Louis Parish Church.”

Then follows:

“First register of marriages of the Saint Louis Parish of New Orleans, containing 376 acts of mar-

riages of white persons, 11 marriages of negroes, and three acts of abjuration of heresy. Said register begins the first day of the month of July of the year 1720 and ends the fourth day of the month of December of the year 1730."

The first entry is as follows: "Marriages of the Province of Louisiana.

"No. 1. The year 1720 and the first of July, a publication of the names having been made at the parochial mass on the 16th of June, and dispensation for the two others having been granted, no impediment having been found between Peter Sinton, a native of Chatelleraux, son of Mr. Adrien Sinton and Françoise Ressay, his father and mother, and Nicole Daucune, native of Châlons in Champagne, daughter of Philip Daucune and Dame Caffet, her father and mother, I, undersigned, missionary and acting pastor in New Orleans, have received their mutual consent and given the nuptial blessing ordered by the Holy Church, in presence of John Gero and Saint George, who have signed with me.

"FATHER F. PROTHAIS BOYER,

"Missionary, Recolet.

"SAINTON.

"NICOLE DAUCUNE."

The first act of abjuration of heresy is as follows:

"In the year 1726, on the 11th of January, John Betzman of the Parish des Allemands, has made in my hands abjuration of the Calvinist heresy in which he was born and reared, in presence of two Germans, who, having said that they did not know

how to sign their names, have made their ordinary mark. In testimony of which I sign:

“F. RAPHAEL,

“Capuchin Priest and Vicar General.

In fact, the oldest original register of the Saint Louis Cathedral Archives is but the third of the collection—the first being at Paris and the second only a copy of the original.

This precious record, begun on the 1st of January, 1731, and finished on the 27th of December, 1733, opens with these words:

“The present register containing ninety-two sheets, this one not included, has been paraphed by us, François Fleuviau, King Counsellor and Attorney General of the Superior Council of the Province of Louisiana, to be used by the rector of New Orleans to record successively and without interruption the baptisms, marriages and burials which will be performed in the said parish according to the decree of 1667.

“New Orleans, this 30th December, 1730.

“F. FLEUVIAU.”

The first entry of baptism reads as follows: “In the year 1731, the 1st of January, at a quarter past twelve o’clock at night, Catherine de Périer was born, legitimate child of Périer Cenier, Chevalier of the Military Order of Saint Louis, Captain of Frigate and Commander General of the Province of Louisiana, and Dame Catherine Le Chibelier, her father and mother; and was baptized in the same hour. The godfather was Mr. Guillaume Nicolas Lange, who has

signed these presents on the day and year above mentioned.

“ PERIER,

“ F. RAPHAEL,

“ Priest Capuchin, Vicar General.

“ LANGE.”

The first record of marriage contained in the same register reads as follows:

“ In the year 1731, the 10th of January, after having published three times at the sermon of the parochial mass the promise of marriage between John Nauère, son of Bernard Nauère and of Jeanne Larode, his father and mother, native of Saint Nicholas of the City of Plaisance in the bishopric of Tarbes in Gascogne, widower of Louise Bridon, deceased in this parish,—and Thérèse Maisonet, daughter of Antoine Maisonet and of Madeleine Malbe, her father and mother, native of the parish of Saint Nicholas des Champs, Archbishopric of Paris, widow of Louis Mirant, deceased at Natchez, having not found any impediment to the said marriage, I, Capuchin Priest, Missionary Apostolic at New Orleans, have received their mutual consent and given the nuptial blessing according to the rites of the Church in the presence of the undersigned witnesses, to-wit: Nicholas Dominique Rousseau, Pierre Martineau, Jean Daniel, who have signed with me.

“ JEAN NAUÈRE,

“ THÉRÈSE MAISONET,

“ JEAN DANIEL ROUSSEAU,

“ PIERRE MARTINET,

“ F. RAPHAEL,

“ Capuchin Priest, Vicar General.”

The third section of the same old register contains the burial records, and the first entry reads as follows:

"In the year 1731 on the 11th of January, I, undersigned Capuchin Priest, Apostolic Missionary at New Orleans, have buried in the cemetery of this parish with the ordinary ceremonies of the Church, the corpse of the deceased, Etienne Duchesne, a captain of the port, who died on the 10th of January, having received the sacraments of the church. In testimony of which I sign.

"FATHER PIERRE,
"Priest Capuchin, Apostolic Missionary."

The slaves were often baptized by groups of ten, fifteen and even twenty.

Then, for the sake of brevity, the priest used to write in three columns. In the first were the names of the newly baptized, in the second the names of their masters and in the third the names of the godfathers and godmothers. Thus on page 37 occurs:

"In the year 1733 and the 4th of March, I administered the baptism of the catechumens with the ordinary ceremony of the Church to the adult negroes and negresses hereafter named:

<i>Names of the Baptized.</i>	<i>Their Masters.</i>	<i>Godfathers and Godmothers.</i>
Michel	Mr. Dupont	H. Marquier
Etienne	Lempileur	E. Janot
François	Alexandre	Larche
John Baptist	Roy	Marquis
Charles	Deslatte	C. Marqnet
Dominique	Nicholas	Bunel Jonior
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

"In witness thereof I signed, this day and month as above.

"RAPHAEL,

"Vicar General, Rector.

* * *

On one of the last pages of the same register there is pasted a very interesting document which alludes to the terrible massacre by the Natchez Indians of the white settlers, at "Terre Blanche," in December, 1729.

This act is written in form of an affidavit and is signed by Guebo and Cantrelle. These were the names of the two only survivors of the massacre. Guebo and Cantrelle, after escaping from the horrible fate of their unfortunate fellow settlers, made their way to New Orleans, reaching the city after a very long and tedious journey. They had saved from the fury of the Indians a child of four months, a boy, whom they managed to bring alive to New Orleans, the little waif's life having been preserved by the providential offer of a friendly squaw, who suckled the infant during the whole of the perilous journey.

Some time after the men had reached the city, they were interviewed by the ecclesiastical authorities for the purpose of ascertaining if the child had been baptized. Guebo and Cantrelle answered affirmatively, but a formal declaration was exacted, drafted in French by Guebo, signed by him and Cantrelle, and placed among the records of the Church.

The orthography of this old document is primitive, and as an historical curiosity deserves to be copied literally. It reads as follows:

“ Nous soussignés habittans réchappés du massacre des Natchez ; certifions a tous, qu'il appartiendra, qu'il aesté Baptisé aud. Lieu Le fils de monsieur des Noyers, aide major des troupes des Natchez et directeur de la concession de la terre Blanche, et de Madame Angelique Charisson, les père et mère, Nez le 9 aout 1729 et Baptisé le 10 dud. mois par le Révérend Père Philibert capucin; et que les Parrin èt marreine estoient Monsieur Des Ursins de la loire, concessionnaire aud. Lieu, et Madlle Des Noyers ; Et que lèd. Enfant fut nommé Antoine Laurent des Noyers.

“ En foy de quoy Nous avons donnéle présent pour Certificat attendu que tous les Papiers Et tous les Effets de tout le monde ont pery dans led. massacre, à la Nouvelle Orléans ce 10 fevrier 1733.

“ GUEBO, CANTRELLE.”

Freely translated, this affidavit means :

“ That we, the undersigned colonists, escaped from the massacre by the Natchez Tribe, certify that the son of Mr. Des Noyers, aide-Major of troops at Natchez and director of the concession (or reservation) of the “ Terre Blanche ;” and of Mme. Angelique Charison, his father and mother, was born on the 9th day of August, 1729, and was christened on the 10th day of that month by the Rev. Father Philibert, Capuchin ; and that the godfather and godmother were Mr. Des Ursins de la Loire and Madame Des Noyers ; and that said child was named Antoine Laurent Des Noyers. In faith whereof we have given these presents as a certificate, because all the papers and effects of all the people at Natchez were lost in the massacre.

“ New Orleans, 10th February, 1733.”

Still more interesting than the baptisms or mortuary registers is the book containing the minutes of the meetings held by the Church Wardens.

These reports run from November, 1738, to March, 1833. Among other subjects of minor importance they relate the famous suit of the Wardens against Abbé Walsh and the long discussion raised by the City Council about the ownership of the cemetery.

The monthly reports of the expenses of the Church are of a peculiar interest, as they give an idea of the importance of the Saint Louis Cathedral, at this time the only parish church of the city. There is for instance the report of January, 1825 :

*Names of the Persons of the Clergy of the Saint Louis Church
of New Orleans and of the Employees of the Said
Church, With Their Respective Salary :*

	Per Month
The Rev. Father Antoine de Sedella, rector.....	\$70 00
Mr. l'Abbé Moni, curate and sacrist	55 00
Mr. l'Abbé Michaud, curate	50 00
Mr. l'Abbé Borgna (in France or Europe).....	50 00
Mr. l'Abbé Gallagher, assistant to the clergy	30 00
Mr. Rufin Fernandez, first chorister.....	35 00
Mr. M. Landun, chorister and music master	30 00
Mr. Jean Ximénes, chorister.....	25 00
Mr. Castro Gonzales, sub-deacon and chorister.....	20 00
Mr. Christoval Rodriguez, sacristan.....	26 50
Ant. Munoz, altar boy	20 00
Ant. Catoir, altar boy.....	10 00
Jacques Astin, altar boy.....	10 00
Philosène Portail, altar boy.....	10 00
Jean Mazerat, altar boy.....	10 00
Pierre Maspero, altar boy	10 00
Mr. l'Abbé Portier, teacher of the school of thirty boys.	100 00
Mr. Quimper, teacher of the school of twenty little girls.	52 00

Mr. J. B. Labatut, treasurer of the corporation, five per cent of commission.....	—
Mr. Ant. Cruzat, collector of the corporation, five per cent of commission.....	—
Mr. E. Ronx, grave digger.	—
Mr. Lonis Laporte, organist.....	30 00
A negro who blows the organ	3 00
	Per Year
Mr. C. Bouk, lute maker.....	100 00
Hyacinthe Castor, secretary to the wardens	200 00
	Per Month
Lucien Vignand, clock maker.....	15 00
Jean Castro, beadle and janitor.....	20 00
Mme. Widow Fernandez, laundress.....	11 00

Other records of the book enlighten us upon the conditions of the city at this time.

For instance, this letter concerning a night watchman to be posted on the roof of the church, whose duty it would be to ring the alarm bell in case of fire.

“To the Administrators of the Saint Louis Church of New Orleans:

“Several attempts having been made to burn down the city, a committee of citizens called on me and begged me to take the necessary measures to prevent any further attempt. Among the means which seemed to them the most convenient is the appointment of a watchman during the night on the platform of the church. He will be charged to ring the bells at the first sight of a fire, and to light a beacon to indicate its direction.

“If you accede to this request I will have a wicket pierced in the wall of the church tower the nearest to the City Hall.

“TRUDEAU,
“Recorder and Acting Mayor.

The Wardens favored the idea and thenceforth a watchman stood on the platform of the church and kept a sharp lookout on any glare that could materialize into a fire.

The above quotations are but a few of the many pages of the book that prove interesting. Details trifling in themselves are of considerable importance when we look upon them as facts illustrative of the life and manners of the old colonial days in Louisiana.

It is chiefly in this respect that a close perusal of the archives of the Saint Louis Cathedral is of the highest importance to those who wish to get or give, not a romantic, but a true, real and vivid picture of the past.

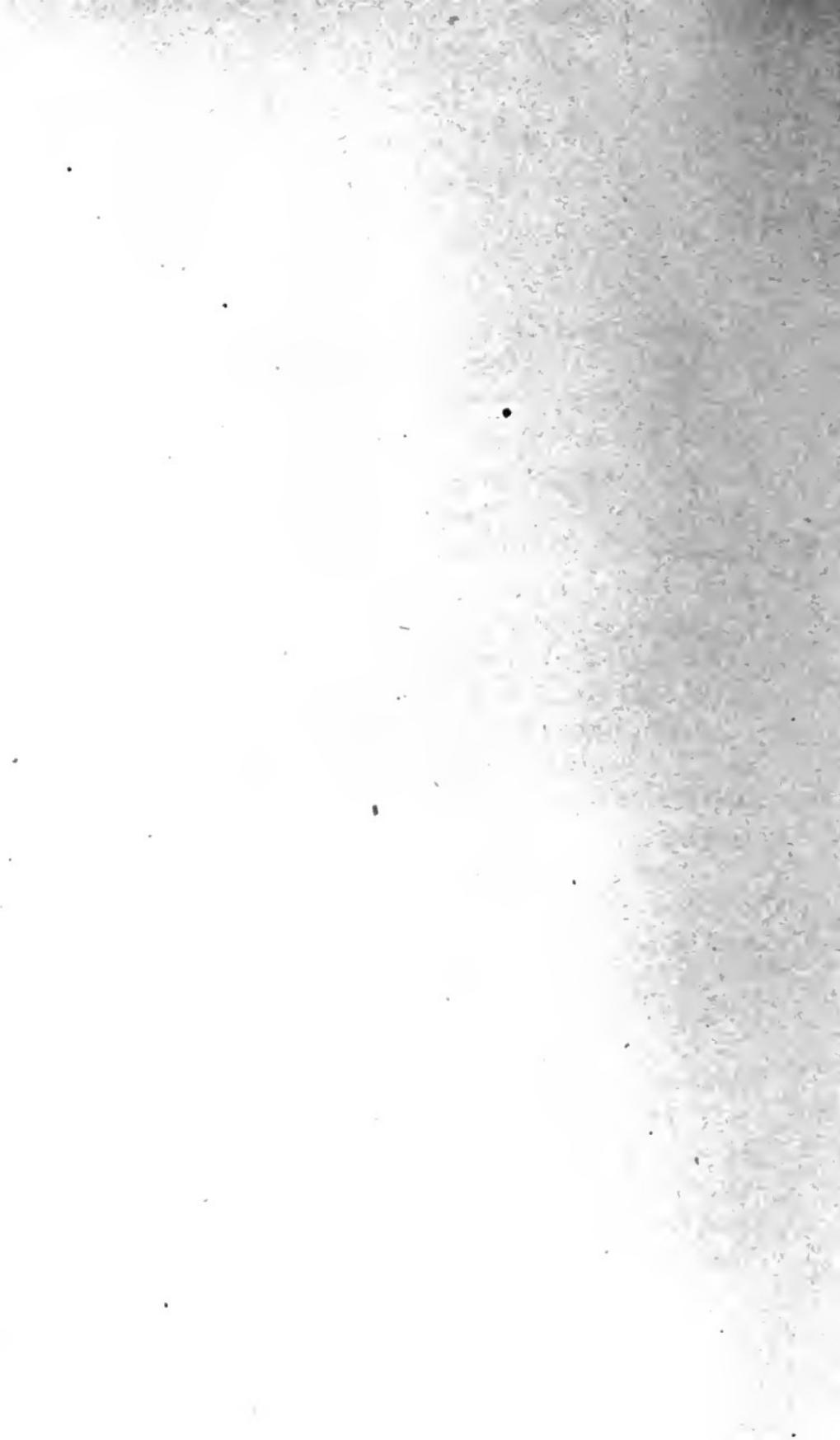
These registers constitute a precious mine of information, and too much care cannot be taken to protect and preserve them against the ravages of time or the depredations of men.

The present incumbent of the rectorship of the Cathedral, Right Rev. J. M. Laval, understood fully this necessity, and under his care the records of old, which were slumbering openly on dusty shelves, have been classified and locked up in a large and secure safe.

Every morning the faithful custodian turns the heavy doors on their hinges and the light of day throws a lively touch of color on those venerable registers that speak of birth and marriage and death as if they were the only data of human life.

PART III.

AROUND
THE CATHEDRAL.



CHAPTER I.

THE OLD SAINT LOUIS CEMETERY.

SUCCESSIVE LOCATIONS OF THE EARLIEST CEMETERY OF NEW ORLEANS — INSCRIPTIONS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST — LESSONS ON LIFE LEARNED FROM THE DEAD.

The old Saint Louis Cemetery is the natural out-growth of the Saint Louis Cathedral and stands with it among the oldest and most interesting landmarks of the historical city of New Orleans.

There is nothing gorgeous in its inclosure, no carefully tended lawns, no level stretches of green, no pebbled alleys or flowers in perennial blossoms.

Everywhere Time has left its wasting mark and whoever saunters within its superannuated walls falls a victim to the mystic silence which begets the memories of the past.

Many writers and commentators have endeavored to trace the history of the Saint Louis Cemetery back to its origin, but lack of documentary evidence has given rise to various opinions as to its date of foundation, original location and dimensions.

Dr. Erasmus Fenner, in his "Southern Medical Reports," published in 1850, seems to advocate the most plausible theory on this subject. "In the earliest days of the city," says the Doctor, "the cemetery was situated in the rear of the Cathedral, near the 'Place d'Armes.' But the number of buildings, increasing with the population, gradually gained

more and more ground, and the cemetery was moved to another location much further in the rear of the city. Even now, it is again inclosed within the walls of this ever-growing town, and the time is not distant when the dead shall have to give place to the living."

This hypothesis on the first location of the old Saint Louis Cemetery is confirmed and supplemented by a document which determines, if not the exact location, at least the successive removals of the cemetery.

This document dates back to 1820, and is based upon a discussion between the ecclesiastic and civil authorities.

At this time the Trustees of the Cathedral were ordered by the City Council to remove the Catholic Cemetery, because it was situated too near the residential section and might prove a menace to public health. The Trustees then sought another location, but no suitable one could be found, and the matter dragged until 1823, when the order was renewed in more severe terms, judging from the answer of these worthy Wardens.

Being accused of bad will and the intention to evade the laws enacted for the public welfare, they presented their defense in three long pages filled with assurance and cutting irony. The following is an extract from the whole, written in the pompous style characteristic of those days:

"The Corporation of the Trustees Administrators of the property of the Saint Louis Catholic Church, being fully convinced that the first authority in the State cannot be inspired by other principles than those that concern public welfare, welcomes the coming of the time when it can clear itself of the unjust

imputation made against it by a few individuals, and submits to the Legislature the reasons of fact and law which prevented it from complying with the city ordinances relating hereto."

The petitioners cite the rights of the church on the matter and conclude as follows:

"By said documents, we find the Superior Council under the French Government, the Cabildo under the Spanish domination, and consequently the City Council which has succeeded them, have been obliged and are to provide a cemetery for the burial of the Catholics. The ground originally set aside for this purpose was given up for another tract of land between Saint Peter and Toulouse streets. The Church made use of it up to 1788, when the Cabildo ordered the removal of this cemetery to its present location. And we read in an act dated November 14th, 1800, that the said Cabildo has set apart this place out of the lands belonging to the city and promised to have it fenced and filled out of its own funds, because, having deprived the Church of its cemetery, it was its duty to fully indemnify it.

"This brief exposition of the most essential facts shows that the accusation made against the Trustees in not removing the cemetery really falls upon the City Council.

"To this powerful array of facts we will add as concisely as possible the law on the subject: 'There is a principle acknowledged by all the civilized nations of the earth, which is the basis of all civil contracts and the foundation of our Constitution, viz: That no one can be deprived of his property without a full compensation. This universally re-

spected principle becomes still more binding when applied to a discussion involving the ownership of public property destined to the most sacred use.'

"Being convinced that the Legislature will adopt some measure for the removal of the cemetery from its present location, the Trustees cannot recommend with sufficient force that the law passed for that purpose impose on the City Council the obligation of respecting the place where rest the ashes of our relatives, friends and fellow-citizens by preserving it forever as a cemetery. Scandalous would it be if some day would witness the sale of that sacred ground which even the most barbarous nations hold in great veneration."

The following gentlemen, Trustees of the Saint Louis Cathedral, signed the petition: G. B. Labatut, L. Cavalier, N. Cauve, Marin Argote, Simon Cucullu, P. Rousseau, F. Duplessis, N. Girod, C. L. Blache, H. Landreaux and J. B. Wiltz.

The historical problem, therefore, concerning the original foundation and site of the Old Saint Louis Cemetery, resolves itself thus:

The ground for the Catholic Cemetery was first given by the French Government to the Saint Louis Parochial Church when New Orleans was founded in 1718, and the gift was confirmed "de jure et facto" by the Spanish Cabildo.

The cemetery was originally situated in the rear of the church as was the common custom in those days. But in 1743, the city, having grown considerably, the cemetery was removed and transferred near the city's ramparts, between Saint Peter and Toulouse streets. Finally, in 1788, and for the same

reason, the Spanish Cabildo had it removed a little further, to its present location.

According to a certain tradition, the “Old Saint Louis Cemetery” originally extended as far as Rampart street, the pyramidal monument which now stands at its entrance being then about in the middle of the site. Later, the burial ground was encroached upon and the tombs on the border were leveled and covered by Basin street. This is confirmed by a map preserved in the City Museum, as also by recent excavations made in the middle of Basin street, which brought to light quantities of human bones. Therefore, it is beyond doubt that the Catholic Cemetery, which was transferred in 1788 to the other side of the city’s ramparts, now known as Rampart street, originally extended to these ramparts and included the adjoining ground now covered by Basin street.

Later on, a similar encroachment happened on the other side of the cemetery, as it is substantiated by the following inscription:

*HERE LIE
THE REMAINS OF SEVERAL OF THE FAMILY OF
ROBERT LAYTON,
of This City,

*The Whole Being Removed to This Place on December 10th, 1838,
in Consequence of the Opening of Trémé Street
by the City Authorities.*

As the Old Saint Louis Cemetery is still open to burials, it follows that after many discussions and appeals, the Trustees of the Saint Louis Cathedral

finally had the best of the question brought up by the City Council in 1820, and also in 1823, asking for a removal of the cemetery to a further location. Since that time the question has often been agitated, but it now involves more cemeteries than this, the mother of burying grounds in New Orleans, for the city has extended miles and miles beyond the ancient boundaries, and cemetery after cemetery has been encroached upon and surrounded by the homes of the living. Public opinion is respected by law, the common sentiment being that the graves of the loved and lost must not be disturbed.

In the Old Saint Louis Cemetery, it is true, the dead lie so close together that there is almost no room for the erection of another tomb; but the cemetery opens its vaults to those who are the direct heirs of the soil, and the oldest families of the "vieux carré" still bring hither their dead to place beside the remains of their ancestors.

* * *

The Old Saint Louis Cemetery deserves more than a passing notice. No other spot in New Orleans so recalls the past with all its history, chivalry, sentiment and romance. It is one hundred and twenty years since it has been open to burials; during that time funeral processions have daily crossed its threshold, conveying thither the dead of all ages and of all countries.

Walk along the tortuous alleys, read the old inscriptions buried beneath the tall weeds, and you will find there the whole history of the city since the purchase of Louisiana by the United States. The writer

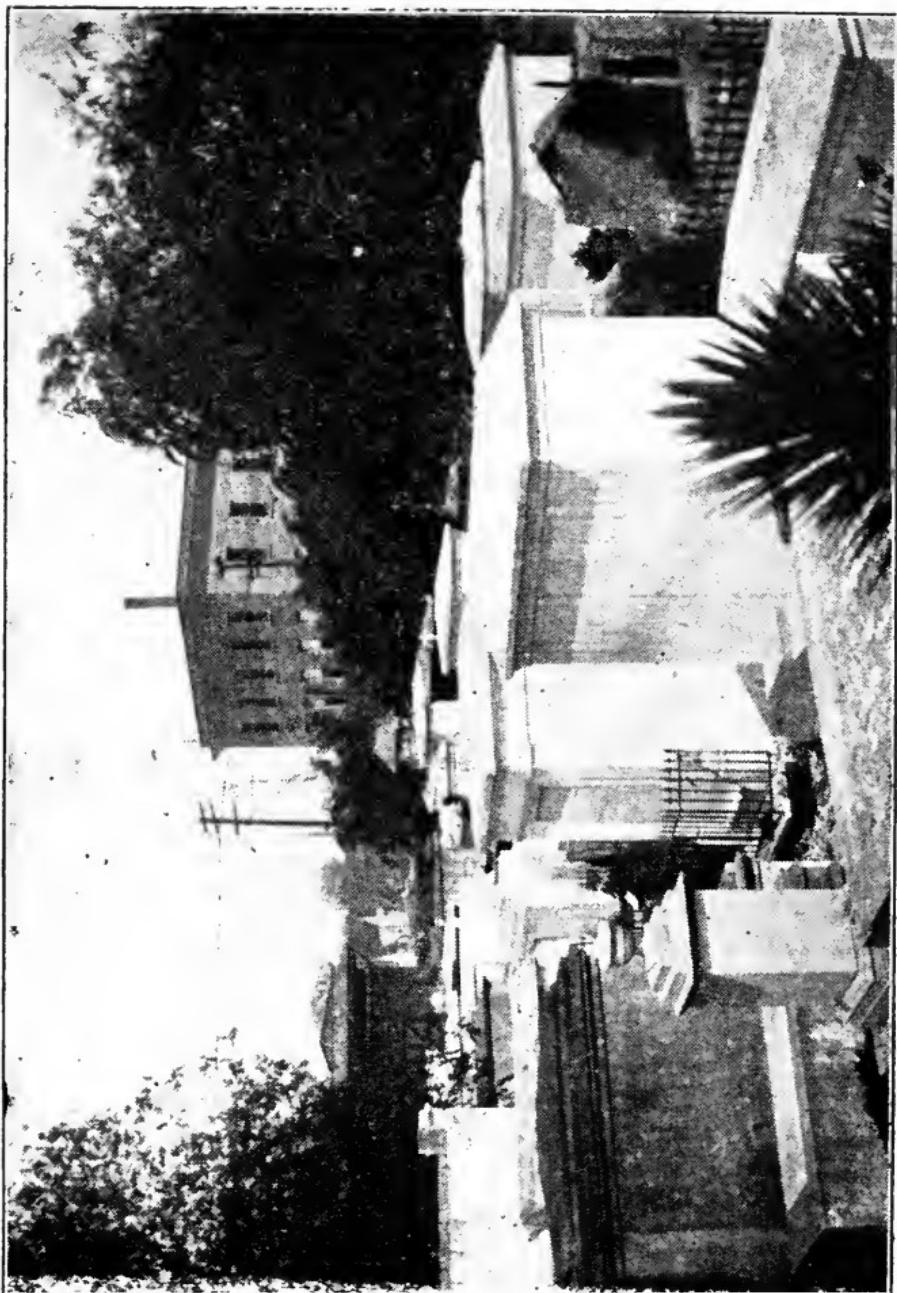


Photo C.M.C. SIDE VIEW OF THE OLD SAINT LOUIS CEMETERY.

has searched the whole cemetery and found that the oldest epitaph extant does not go back further than 1800. It is traced on a small wrought iron cross and reads as follows :

NANETTE F. DE BAILLY,

Died the 24th of September, 1800.

Aged 45 Years.

Though the Saint Louis Cemetery contains tombs of wealthy families, none but the monument of the "New Orleans Italian Benevolent Society" has an artistic value. The different pieces of this mausoleum were imported from Italy, where they were carved. Three life size statues in marble representing Faith, Italy and Motherhood adorn the monument. It is not perhaps the grandest nor the richest mausoleum in the city, but it seems to be the one which embodies the purest forms of funeral architecture.

The Saint Louis Cemetery appeals poorly to the artistic sense, but it is a spot of absorbing interest to those who know and love the past. Within its ancient precincts rest the remains of those who were the makers of the city's history; the sturdy emigrants who came from the Old World to give to their ambition a larger field; men who figured prominently in the early history of the State, others who worked and achieved nothing. There they lie all side by side, some whose names are still remembered, others, for the most part, buried forever in oblivion.

New Orleans is "par excellence" a cosmopolitan city, and this fact cannot be better illustrated than by reading some of the inscriptions chosen at random from among the tombs in the Old Saint Louis Ceme-



Photo C. M. C.

GAYARRÉ AND DE BORÉE'S TOMB.

tery. Almost all the nations, even remote China, are represented among the foreigners who rest there beside the children of the land. Some of the resident foreigners have even formed national societies and own a common tomb; such as "La Société Française de Bienfaisance," "Sociedad Portuguesa de Beneficencia," the "Compania de Voluntarios Catalanes," and others of minor importance.

In the rear of the cemetery, in the same simple, old-fashioned, oven-shaped tomb, rest two men who left an undying name in the annals of our city: the one, Etienne de Boré, the planter who first succeeded in granulating sugar; the other, his grandson, Charles Gayarré, the famous historian of Louisiana.

In the same section of the old graveyard rises a tomb in the form of a fort. It is sacred—

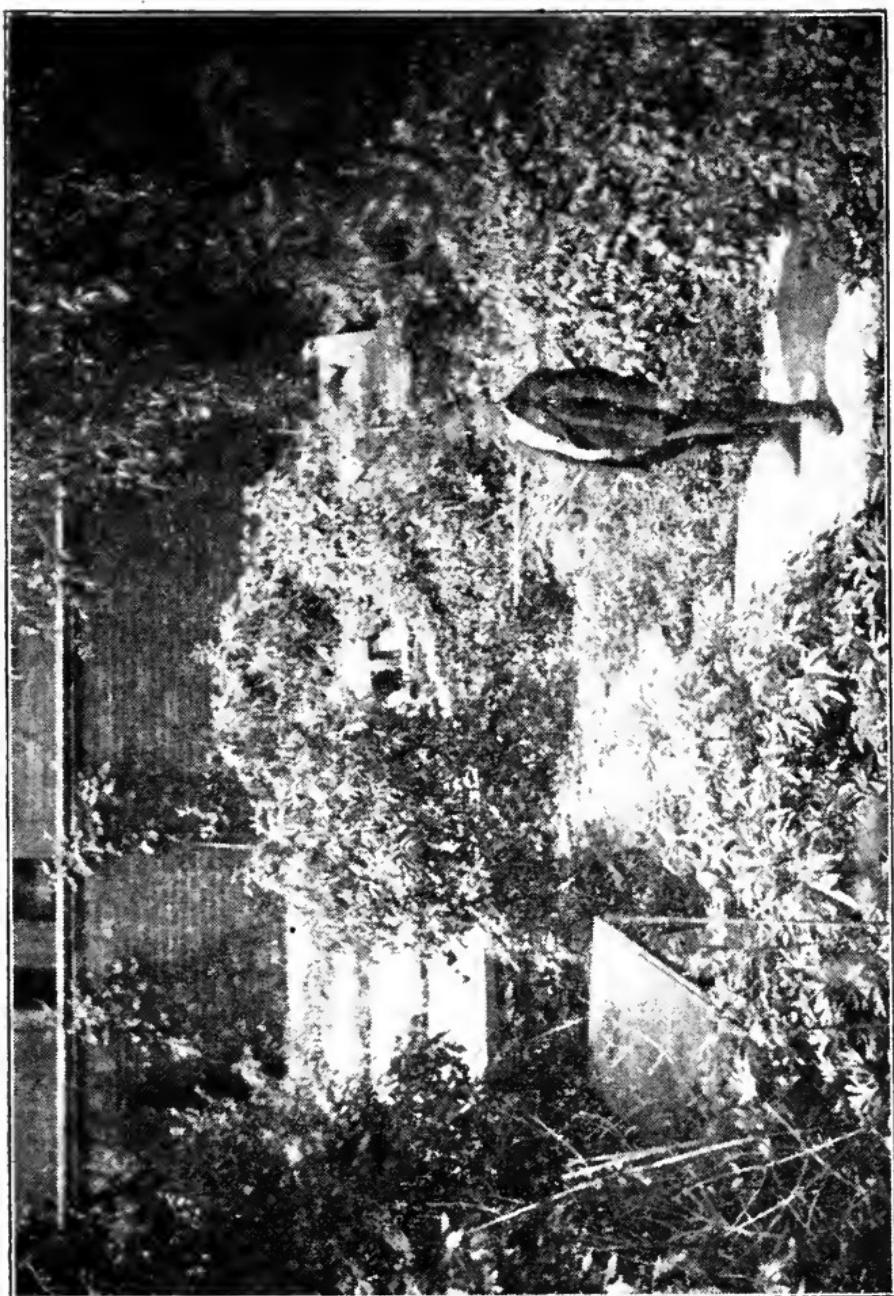
TO THE MEMORY OF
CLARICE DURALDE CLAIBORNE,
*The Youngest Daughter of Martin Dervalde of Attakapas,
and Wife of William C. Claiborne, Governor
of the Territory of Orleans,
Died on the 29th of November, 1809,
in the 21st Year of Her Age.*

In the tomb next to the latter, on the left side, lies buried—

MYRA CLARK GAINES.
*Daughter of
Daniel Clark and Zuline Carrière,
Died January 9th, 1885,
Aged 78 Years.
Rest in Peace.
Erected by Her Loring Godchild,
Myra Clark Gaines Mazerat.*

THE NEGLECTED CORNER.

Photo C. M. G.



Daniel Clark was the American Consul in New Orleans during the Spanish régime, and was claimed by Myra Clark Gaines as her lawful father; a claim out of which grew the litigation of Myra Clark Gaines, which became famous throughout the country. Mrs. Gaines spent her life proving her rights, and after fifty years it was finally decided in her favor by the United States Supreme Court.

The city of New Orleans had to pay the claims, which amounted to thousands of dollars and involved some of the most valuable city property. She is buried beside her father, Daniel Clark, whose grave had fallen into utter decay. Myra Clark Gaines Mazerat, a prominent lady who resides in New Orleans and who was liberally remembered by Mrs. Gaines in her will, restored the ruined grave and built above it a monument.

* * *

Further back in the rear of the cemetery in an enclosed corner, amid weeds of tremendous height, rest the remains of several brave soldiers who fought and laid down their lives for their country in the war with England.

The following are some of the epitaphs that are still visible:

IN MEMORY OF

BENEDICT FRANCIS PRADELLES,

*Born in Bayeux, in the French Flanders,
August 31st, 1755.*

*He Served During the American Revolution as an
Officer in the French Army.*

December 23rd, 1814.



Photo C. M. C.

A FORLORN ALLEY.

ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF
WILLIAM PARMFEE,
A Native of New England,
Who Was Killed in the Defense of the City of New Orleans,
in the Battle With the British Army,
December 23rd, 1814.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
WILLIAM P. CAMBY,
Midshipman of the U. S. Navy, Born (Norfolk),
August 10th, 1796,
Who Fell in That Inequal Conquest
Between the U. S. Gunboat Squadron and the British Flotilla,
on Lake Borgne, Near New Orleans,
December 14, 1814.

What a lesson it is to look upon these abandoned tombs, and how pitiful after all is human greatness. There sleep heroes who bravely gave their lives for the defense of their own City and State, and yet there are none today to show them the simple tribute of gratitude and respect by even so small a thing as keeping their graves in good order.

Not far from those who died on the battlefield in defense of New Orleans, lies buried a youth who fell under the “dueling oaks,” a victim of honor, one of the too many who at this time sought vengeance at the point of a foil, or mistook their right with their skill of marksman.

HERE ALSO RESTS THE BODY OF
MICAJAH GREEN LEWIS,
Brother of Eliza Claiborne and Private Secretary
to Governor Cluiborne,
Who Fell in a Duel on February 14th, 1805,
In the 20th of His Age.

With the dead made self-illustrious by their deeds, are the dead illustrious by reason of their birth, for some inscriptions bear names and titles among the oldest of the European nobility, notably the following:

TO HER SON,

ALBERT MONTECUCCOLI LADERCHI,

Born March 30th, 1829, Died August, 1853,

His Mother Praying for the Repose of His Soul.

Chalmette, Countess Montecuccoli Laderchi,

Born Princess Cettingen Wallenstein.

C I GIT

DEMOISELLE ANNE BARBE DOMINIQUE,

Née à Madrid l'an 1771,

Décédée le 22 Juillet 1808,

Fille Légitime de feu Jean Rodolphe, Baron de Bronner,

Lieutenant Colonel des Armées de S. M. C.,

et de Dame Camille Carpona de Spinola.

Illustrious neither by birth nor by deeds, but full of promise for a successful life, was the obscure young man who lies beneath the following touching inscription :

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
RICHARD,
*Only Son of Richard and Lucretia Law,
Who Came to This Country November, 1818,
Under the Flattering Auspices of a Generous and
Disinterested Patron.*

*The Sanguine Ardor of a Youthful Imagination
Led Him to Look Forward to the Time
When by Diligence and Frugality
Every Sacrifice Would Be Repaid
By His Returning With a Competency
To His Parents and Sisters.*

*It Pleased the Almighty God, Disposer of Our Destinies,
To Convince Us of the Ineertainty
of All Earthly Happiness.
He Fell a Victim of the Yellow Fever
September 16th, 1809,
Aged Twenty-three Years and Ten Months.
“A Father’s Hope, a Mother’s Joy.”*

Is not this cemetery a world in itself? From all parts of the earth the dead are here: they belong to all the degrees of society, made equal in death! All await in the majestic silence of the tomb the great awakening.

The “Old Saint Louis Cemetery” is something more than an historical landmark. Through the spectacle of death it speaks of life, and nowhere may we recall with a deeper sense of their significance the immortal lines of the poet:

“Life is real, Life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returneth,
Was not spoken of the soul.”

CHAPTER II.

ST. ANTHONY MORTUARY CHAPEL.

THE ORIGIN OF A SHRINE—LAST YEARS OF A SOLDIER PRIEST —ST. ANTHONY CHAPEL BECOMES AN ITALIAN PARISH CHURCH.

At the corner of North Rampart and Conti streets stands the old Mortuary Chapel of New Orleans, known in our days as the Church of Saint Anthony of Padua. Rampart street marked the ancient limits of the city laid out by Bienville, the street having been so named because of the strong redoubt which ran along it in colonial days.

As the city spread beyond its primitive limits, the moat which ran through the centre of the neutral ground, or present ear track, was filled in; beautiful shade trees were planted along the way on either side; the outlying section of the ancient city gradually became a resident portion.

This rapid growth of old New Orleans, which a few years before had caused the City Council to order the removal of the Old Saint Louis Cemetery to a further location, operated in 1819 as a powerful argument with the authorities to urge upon the Trustees of the Saint Louis Cathedral the erection of a mortuary chapel, whence the dead would be directly conveyed from their abode, and thence to the adjoining cemetery, thus avoiding, as the Mayor explained, "those funeral processions which are but

too apt to scatter throughout the city the fatal miasma of fever."

It is, therefore, to the City Council that the old Mortuary Chapel owed its origin. The negotiations began in June, 1819. In consequence of a motion put before the City Council, and adopted, the Mayor wrote to the Trustees of the Saint Louis Cathedral, offering them part of the lots bordering on the parochial cemetery. "This land," the Mayor said, "would be sold to the Trustees at a moderate price, if they, in their well-known devotedness to the public welfare, would have a mortuary chapel erected there."

The proposal of the City Council was accepted, and Mr. Caisergues, President of the Trustees, was charged to reach an agreement with the Mayor on the subject. Unfortunately, the Cathedral was very much in need of money at this time, the parish fund having been drained by the erection of a new steeple, the purchase of a town clock and an organ. So this project, like many others, fell through for lack of means.

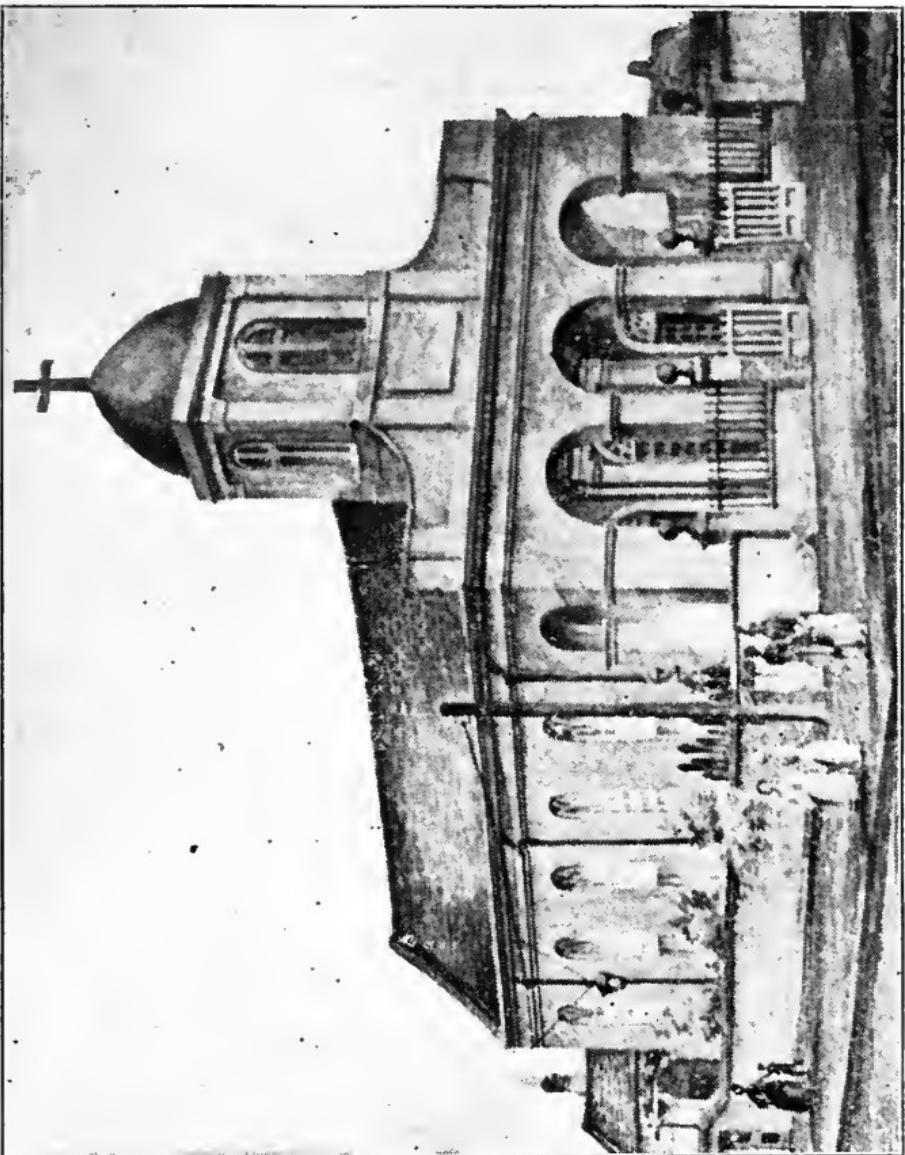
The question, however, was not forgotten, and in September, 1824, the City Council renewed the proposition, recalling the negotiations opened a few years before, and the willingness of the Trustees at that time to comply with the request. The treasury of the Cathedral being now in a better condition, the Trustees appointed a committee to meet the Mayor and carry out the desires of the City Council.

December 29, 1825, the negotiations were completed. The lots offered by the city were bought by the Saint Louis Cathedral at a cost of \$425 each. The deed of sale, properly made out and signed, was de-

From a Drawing in Memorial Hall.

Saint Anthony Chapel in 1840.

Photo C. M. C.



posed in the archives of Felix de Armas, a Notary Public.

Once in complete and undisputed possession of the grounds, the Trustees of the Saint Louis Cathedral at once proceeded to carry out the idea of erecting the Mortuary Chapel, and in September, 1826, issued a call for competitive bids. The bid made by Messrs. Gnillet & Gurlie was given the preference. According to their plans the building was to be 40 French feet in width, 80 feet in length, and 24 feet in height. The total cost of the chapel, with the guardian's house and the wall of inclosure, was to amount to \$14,000, payable in installments according to the contract. While the building was in course of erection, however, several alterations in the way of improvements were incorporated in the original plan, and the total cost of the buildings thus raised to about \$17,000.

The work was prosecuted with great rapidity, and on Wednesday, October 14, 1826, at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon, the corner stone of the chapel was laid by Rev. Antonio de Sedella, the famous and beloved Père Antoine who played such a part in the early history of New Orleans. Père Antoine was assisted by his clergy; the Trustees of the Saint Louis Cathedral, the Mayor, the City Council and the Recorder of the city were also present at the ceremony. Within a few months, quaint and beautiful, and in keeping with the ancient Spanish style of architecture which prevailed in New Orleans, the Mortuary Chapel arose. Even before its completion, a custodian, whose name was Louis Vallegas, was appointed and given a salary of \$21 a month. At the same time

the City Council hastened to bring into execution the sanitary measures it desired to inaugurate, and issued the following decree, September 29, 1827:

“The Trustees of the Saint Louis Parish Church, having informed the City Council that the Mortuary Chapel erected near the Saint Louis Cemetery is now completed, the City Council hereby resolves :

“That from the first of November, it is forbidden to take to, or to expose a corpse in the Saint Louis Parish Church, under the penalty of \$50, to be levied for the benefit of the Corporation, against any one who shall have taken to or exposed a corpse in the aforesaid church. Any priest who shall perform a funeral ceremony in the same church shall be liable to the same fine. Henceforth the dead shall be conveyed to the Mortuary Chapel, where the funeral rites shall be performed.

(Signed)

“D. PRIEUR,
“Recorder.

“Approved September 26, 1827.

“ROFFIGNAC,
“Mayor.”

December 27, 1827, after the mass, and in presence of the civil authorities, Père Antoine blessed the new sanctuary.

As the Saint Louis Cathedral was the only Catholic church in the city, and the Old Saint Louis Cemetery the only Catholic cemetery, funerals came in large numbers every day, and soon the custodian was unable to call the priests of the Cathedral to perform the rites. Father Tomero, who appears to have been a missionary priest, being aware of this

state of affairs, offered himself as chaplain of the Mortuary Chapel, and was accepted at a salary of \$30 a month. The appointment of a resident chaplain forms the actual starting point of the Church of Saint Anthony of Padua.

It continued to be used as a mortuary chapel until about 1860.

During forty years and more, from the time that Père Antoine first chanted there the “*De Profundis*,” and the “*Requiescat in Pace*,” its portals were daily open to funeral processions, and its walls re-echoed the unchanging and solemn liturgy of the Church over her dead, “Eternal rest give unto them, oh, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.”

How many hundreds of this old Franco-Spanish city have spent within the venerable walls of the old chapel their last hour at the light of day, God alone can tell.

In 1853, just after the terrible epidemic of yellow fever, the City of New Orleans had far outgrown the purpose for which the Ancient Mortuary Chapel was founded. All over the city, from Carrollton to the Barracks, were scattered churches, Catholic and Protestant. To these churches the dead had been borne in one of the most fatal visitations of yellow fever that New Orleans had ever known. It seemed to everyone the height of absurdity to apply to the Saint Louis Cathedral Parish alone, the sanitary regulation of 1827, regarding the burial of the dead. The city had outgrown the regulation, and the old Mortuary Chapel had outlived the original purposes for which it had been founded. The same law that applied to other churches in permitting funeral ser-

vices to be held within their portals, now applied to the Saint Louis Cathedral, and the use of the old chapel for mortuary purposes was gradually discontinued.

* * *

Some ten years afterwards was attached to the Saint Louis Cathedral as assistant the great soldier

priest of the Confederacy, Rev. Father Turgis. His famous record in the great struggle between the States is not only a matter of Southern, but of national history. When the struggle ended the hearts of the old soldiers followed their friend and father, and evening after evening his room in the Old St. Louis Presbytery was thronged with his comrades of the Old Or-

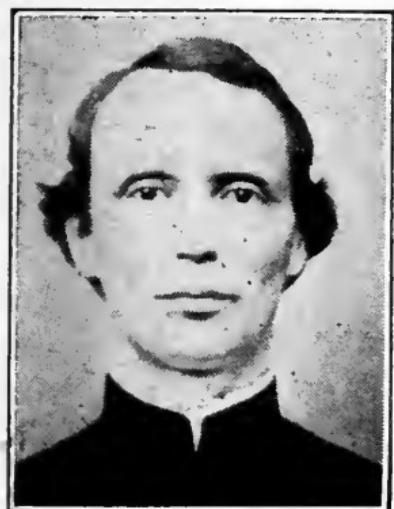


Photo C. M. C. From a Crayon in
Memorial Hall.

FATHER TURGIS.

leans Guard and Pointe Coupée Artillery. Finally the survivors of these two historic commands thought that Father Turgis ought to have a church for himself, and so they petitioned the sainted Archbishop Odin to give him a parish. Having no other church to offer the warrior priest, Archbishop Odin gave him the old Mortuary Chapel on North Rampart street, and there, day after day, the faithful old priest said

mass with members of his old guard kneeling around. The walls of that little church and presbytery could unfold the most beautiful tale of brotherly love could they speak, for the small pension allowed Father Turgis by the boys in gray was all distributed in alms to the old and helpless Confederates, who used to style him their Guardian Angel. About the quaint old confessional were grouped every Saturday night the old soldiers who had followed him so faithfully during the bloody war. Around the Communion table they would gather, and the few survivors who are still among us love to relate how evening after evening found not less than fifteen or twenty of the old soldiers gathered in his room in the presbytery just back of the chapel. They represented every creed; they loved him and delighted to recount with him the days that had so bitterly tried their hearts and souls.

Father Turgis died in the little back room of the old presbytery of Saint Anthony's Church. Almost his last words were: "I have seen death so often that I do not fear it now." His remains were exposed in the old chapel and here was chanted above them the Solemn Requiem Mass. No funeral in New Orleans, except that of Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy, ever attracted such a crowd to the city. From all parts of the State the Confederate veterans came to the old chapel. The streets were thronged for blocks around. Hundreds of men and women followed the funeral on foot. All the survivors of the Army of Northern Virginia and of the Army of Tennessee followed the remains to their last resting place in the New Saint Louis Cemetery,

where a beautiful monument has been raised to Father Turgis' memory by the Army of Tennessee.

* * *

Immigration from Italy began to pour into New Orleans. It soon became apparent to the Archbishop, Most Rev. Napoléon Joseph Perché, that more special provision had to be made for the religious guidance of these emigrants. For some years there had stood in Esplanade street, near the Levee, a frame building which was called the Chapel of the Resurrection. It was devoted exclusively to the use of Italian emigrants, and Rev. Father Cajone was in charge. In the early '70s he had as assistant in his work Rev. Father Manoritta, than whom no Italian worker became better known in New Orleans.

In January, 1875, Archbishop Perché decided to convert the old Mortuary Chapel into a parish for the Italians, and he named Rev. Father Manoritta as rector. The ancient edifice, which had from its foundation served as an annex to the Saint Louis Cathedral, was now entirely severed from connection with it, and became a distinct parish church for Italians under the name of Saint Anthony of Padua's Church. The following is the first record found among the parish archives: "This day, January 25, 1875, I have baptized the first person ever baptized in this church of Saint Anthony of Padua. Signed, Father Manoritta, formerly chaplain of the Chapel of the Resurrection." The church continued in charge of Father Manoritta until November 5, 1902, when he resigned the rectorship to spend his last days in his native Italy. The last baptism recorded by Father

Manoritta is dated November 2, 1902. On November 5, 1902, His Grace, the lamented Archbishop Chapelle, placed the Church of Saint Anthony of Padua in charge temporarily of the late Rev. Father Widman, S. J., who continued to administer its affairs for eleven months until October 1, 1903, when Archbishop Chapelle confined the care of the Italian people to the Spanish Dominican Fathers, and placed Saint Anthony's Church in their charge. The rector of the church is Very Rev. Thos. Lorente, O. P. He is one of the famous Philippine Friars, having been professor in the University of Saint Thomas, at Manila. He served as Secretary to Most Rev. P. L. Chapelle, while the latter was Apostolic delegate in the Philippine Islands, immediately after the close of the late war with Spain. Through the zeal of the Dominican Fathers the little congregation, scattered all over the city, has grown considerably. Many of the old customs of the churches of Italy still maintain here and the feasts are celebrated with elaborate ceremonies.

Once it was feared that the ancient landmark would be given over to the pickaxe and hammer of demolishers, and that travelers would be seen hurrying onward in the busy rush of commerce and pleasure, to the spot where once men went for meditation and prayer. But such a fate seems to have been conjured, and the ironclad monster engines that once menaced not only the existence of Saint Anthony's Chapel, but of the Old Saint Louis Cemetery beyond, now roll on between both, bringing in close touch the restless activity of the living and the eternal stillness of the dead.

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD URSULINE CONVENT (ARCHBISHOPRIC).

PIONEERS OF FEMALE EDUCATION IN AMERICA — MEMORABLE JOURNEY OF THE URSULINE NUNS—A TRIUMPHAL PAGEANT—A MUTE WITNESS OF THE PAST.

The first Ursuline Convent ranks with the Cathedral and the Old Saint Louis Cemetery among the most interesting landmarks of New Orleans.

The devouring tooth of time has eaten into the blue gray stucco which once covered its massive walls, but not a vestige of its old aspect has departed, and although battered and decayed, the old convent is still one of the largest and strongest buildings of the "Old Carré."

It is even more than an old mansion ; it is a relic of the past, a household of souvenirs, a living witness of the wonderful story of the Ursulines that reads like a romance in our day.

Let the visitor stop at the porch and recall the seemingly endless journey of the pious voyagers from Hennebon ; then religious awe and deeper respect will escort him throughout, where lived and died those whose purity of life has been equaled only by the firmness and devotion they showed in upholding this higher standard of womanhood of which the daughters of Louisiana give so noble a living example.

Just a few years after having transferred the Capitol of Louisiana from Mobile to New Orleans,

Governor Bienville thought to secure some teachers to educate the girls of the colony. A boys' school had been already opened by a Capuchin monk, Father Cécil, who taught his pupils in a house adjacent to his monastery, near the parish church.

At first Bienville turned to his native country, Canada, to enroll some "Sœurs Grises," but his project proved impracticable.

He then consulted Father Beaubois, Superior of the Jesuits, who offered to apply to the Ursulines of Rouen. After much deliberation a treaty was concluded, September 13, 1726, by which these pious ladies engaged to supply teachers and nurses for New Orleans.

A lady bearing the somewhat singular name of Tranchepain, was appointed superioress. She was a convert from Calvinism, and had taken the veil among the Ursulines in 1699. All the nuns chosen for the Louisiana mission assembled in the monastery of Hennebon, in Brittany, to acknowledge as their superioress Marie Tranchepain of Saint Augustine, January 1, 1727. On the 27th of January, 1727, the nuns looked their last on Paris, whence they journeyed to Lorient, delayed by execrable roads and bad weather, but bright and cheerful under all contrarieties. On February 22 they bade adieu to their country "for the glory of God and the salvation of poor savages." They sailed on the "Gironde" with the Jesuit Fathers Tartarin and Doutreleau and "Frère Cruey," who, with Madeleine Hachard, a novice, being the youngest of the party, considered it "their duty to amuse the rest."

The voyage had its chroniclers, and every incident is vividly described in the letters and diaries of Mother Tranchepain and Sister Hachard. These nuns wrote with ease and elegance, and one cannot read their narratives without interest. It would take too long to give details of this seven months' journey from Paris to New Orleans over the stormy Atlantic, among the West Indian Isles, on the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, and up the Mississippi. Besides, no words can describe, in these days of rapid travel with Pullman boudoirs and ocean palaces, the sufferings of those "who went down to the sea in ships," a hundred and eighty-one years ago. Now they were threatened with a watery grave, again with starvation and thirst; once the ship barely escaped hostile corsairs; later they encountered savages of so peculiarly ferocious a type that they murdered by slow tortures all the whites whom they captured and made every victim drink his own blood.

The scenery and the trials of the last days of this journey were a befitting climax to the voyage. Probably no scene on earth was so bleak and dreary as was the entrance from the Gulf to the Mississippi, nearly two hundred years ago. An interminable waste of waters, a vast morass impassable for man or beast, shoals and bars, low strips of coast covered with poplars, prairies of reeds, a wilderness of cane brakes, the mouths of the river strewn with drift wood and half choked with wrecks—these greeted the voyagers.

As they ascended the river, forests that seemed co-eval with the creation itself opened before their eyes; here and there were seen a solitary hut for

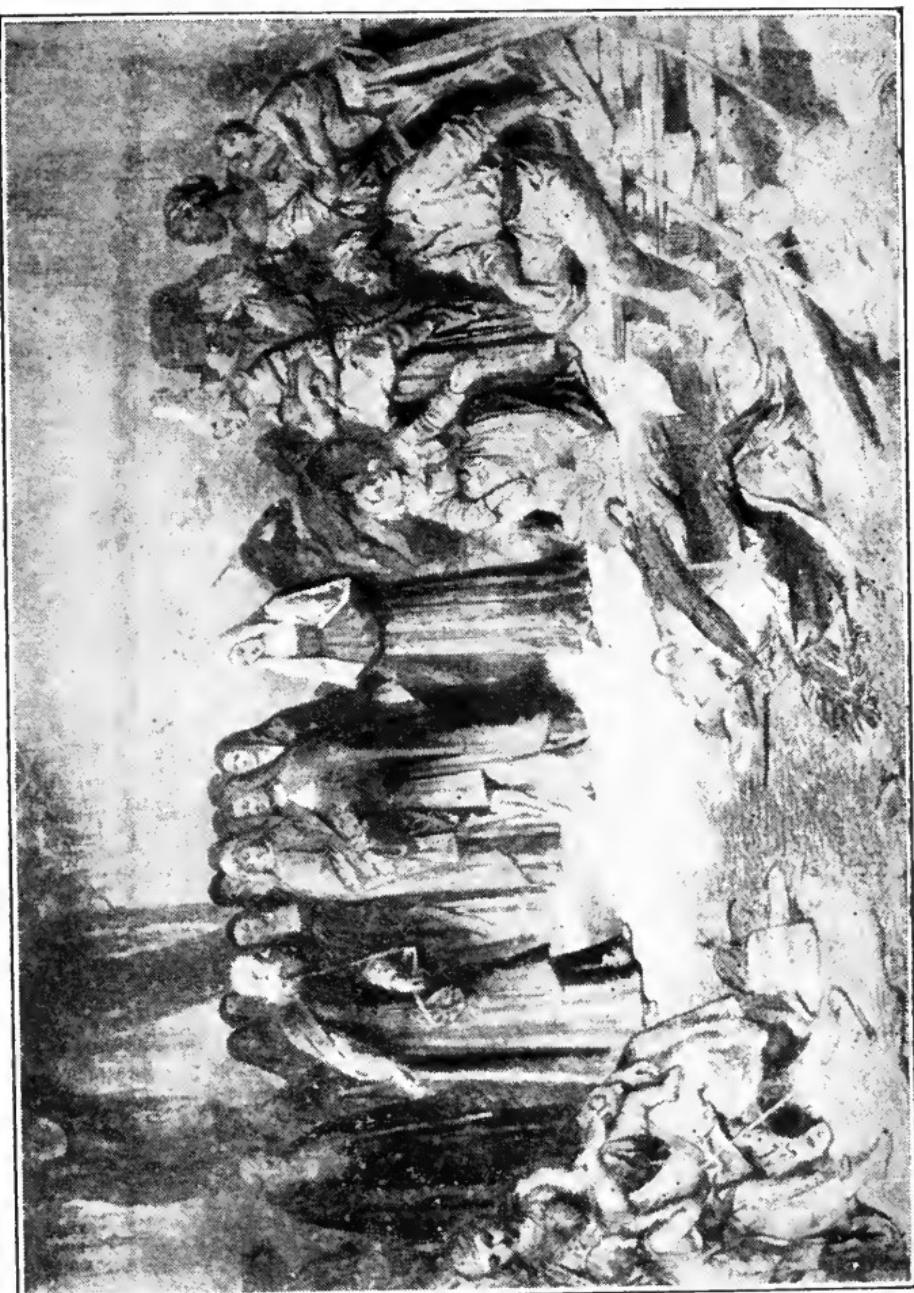
pilots, stretches of green savanna, gaunt trunks of trees stuck fast in the sand, gigantic cypress shrouded in funeral moss, half submerged in the yellow waves. Gloom and magnificence everywhere mingled ; fishes disporting themselves ruffled the old gold surface of the melancholic river; blue cranes, like flying skeletons, hovered about the little flotilla; swarthy, half nude natives in pirogues and chaloupes glided among the wondrous waves, shimmering in the mystic charm of the summer sunlight. “Neverless, the trials and fatigues of our five months’ voyage,” writes Sister Hachard, “are not to be compared with what we had to endure in our fifteen days’ journey from the Gulf to New Orleans, a distance of thirty leagues.”

On August 7th, 1727, the nuns reached the city of which our chronicler gives the rather flattering description : “It is very handsome, well built and regularly laid out. The streets are wide and straight; the houses wainscoted and latticed, the roofs supported by whitewashed pillars and covered with shingles, that is, thin boards cut to resemble slates, and imitating them to perfection. * * * The colonists sing that their town is as beautiful as Paris. But I find a difference. The songs may persuade those who have never seen the capital of France. But I have seen it, and they fail to persuade me.” To tell the truth, the country, save for a small space around the church, was thickly wooded to the water’s edge, and the trees were of prodigious height. The squares and streets laid out by engineer La Tour were still mostly on paper. Since the hurricane of 1728 had swept away the cabins of the first settlers, it is true, colonists were slowly rebuilding the town on

Courtesy of the Ursuline Ladies.

THE LANDING OF THE URSULINE NUNS.

Photo C. M. C.



a scale of comfort and splendor which surprised and delighted the nuns. A crayon sketch carefully preserved in the present couvent, gives a lively representation of the “Landing of the Ursulines.” The nuns are in procession, wearing the ample garb of their Order. Sister Hachard’s fine, strong lineaments are partially concealed by the flowing white veil of a novice. Father Beaubois presents them to the Capuchins of the parish church, and points out the Indians and negroes, their future charges. A negress holding a solemn ebony baby, regards the group with awe and wonderment. A beautiful squaw, decked with beads and shells, surrounded by plump papooses, half reclining with natural grace on a log, and a very large Congo negro has stopped his work and betaken himself to the top of a wood pile to gaze leisurely on the scene. Claude Massy, an Ursuline postulant, carries a cat which she tenderly caresses, and another, “Sister Anne,” is searching a basket for something; both wear the high peaked Normandy cap. Franciscans heavily bearded, and Jesuits in large cloaks, appear in the distance. Immense trees, which have long since disappeared, overshadow the whole group. The picture is a most interesting and valuable relique, probably the only one in existence which shows all together the first schoolmasters and schoolmistresses of New Orleans and of Louisiana.

Governor Périer, his wife and all the people welcomed the nuns as risen from the dead, for they had been given up as lost.

As the building intended for them was not completed, Bienville’s country house, the best in the colony, was offered to them provisionally. It was

a two-story edifice with a flat roof used as a belvidere or gallery, situated on Bienville street, between Royal and Chartres streets. Six doors gave ingress and egress to the apartments on the ground floor. Large and numerous windows, with sashes covered with fine linen, let in as much light as glass. From the roof the nuns might gaze on a scene of weird and solemn splendor. Swamps and clumps of palmetto and tangled vines; the surrounding wilderness with groups of spreading live oaks (*chénières*) cut up by glassy bayous, was the home of reptiles, wild beasts, vultures, herons and many wondrous specimens of the fauna of Louisiana.

The Sisters at once began to teach the children and extend their cares to the sick, the Indians and the colored folk. Sister Hachard praises the docility of the children, "who can be molded as one pleases." She says that it is easy to instruct the negroes once they have learnt French, but "impossible to baptize the Indians without trembling, on account of their natural propensity to evil, particularly the squaws, who, under an air of modesty, hide the passions of beasts."

The hospital of the Sisters usually had from thirty to forty patients, mostly soldiers. Everything was so well arranged that the officials said it was useless for them to continue their visits, as there was nothing for them to do. At first the infirmarian nun watched the nurses, but ere long she took sole charge. The sick could not say enough in praise of their "mothers," who would gratify their tastes when it could be done without prejudice to their health. "We bless God for the success of this Christian

work," writes Sister Hachard. "The spirit of our holy institute shows itself in the good our Sisters do for souls while attending to the wants of the body."

The community which thus auspiciously began the work of education in Louisiana consisted of eight professed members, one novice and two candidates. Bienville's country house, which had been turned into a convent, soon became too small for the number of ever increasing pupils. Unfortunately the convent, which was in course of construction at the other extremity of the town, did not show any encouraging signs of progress. The Indian Company had promised to have it ready in six months, but the construction dragged along considerably and the six months lengthened out to seven years. The gentlemen who had begun this work with a relative diligence, had grown weary, and neither tears nor solicitations could prevail on them to supply the material and finish the work.

Tradition asserts that the nuns quitted Bienville's villa to live for a time on the plantation they had received from the Indian Company for their support. Nun street, a short street flanked with cotton presses and opening on the levees, is commonly designed as the site of this country house, and Religious street, Notre Dame street, Annunciation street and Teresa street seemed to have formed a kind of network over what is supposed to have been the Ursuline plantation.

* * *

At last the convent, promised by the Indian Company and under construction since seven years,

was completed. The nuns, who had been at a time disheartened by so long an expectance, again became hopeful and made their removal to the new monastery the occasion of one of the most elegant pageants ever seen in this city. On Saturday, the 13th of July, 1734, just as the nuns resolved to postpone their departure indefinitely on account of a rain which had lasted three days, the sun bursted out suddenly from the cloudy heavens, and in his brilliant light and tropical heat the waters soon subsided. The nuns took the sudden clearing of the sky as a good omen, and at 5. P. M. all their bells rang out to announce their intended departure. Bienville, whose third term (1733-1743) had recently begun, soon appeared in the convent chapel, where the nuns knelt for the last time. Fathers Beaubois and Petit, and Brother Parisel, Jesuits; Fathers Philip and Pierre, Capuchins, and the most distinguished people of the place surrounded the brilliantly lighted altar, and the troops, half French and half Swiss, drew up on either side of the old Bienville mansion, which had served as a convent for the past seven years. This venerable house, that saw the beginning of the Ursulines in Louisiana, and in which died the brave and gentle superioress, Mother Augustine Tranchepain, on November 11, 1733, was destroyed in the dreadful conflagration of Good Friday, 1788.

After the benediction, given by Father Philip, assisted by Fathers Beaubois and Petit, all left the chapel in procession, the citizens opening the march. Then came the children of the orphanage and the day school pupils, followed by forty of the principal ladies of the city, bearing torches; next twenty

young girls, robed and veiled in the purest white, and twelve others, representing Saint Ursula and her 11,000 companions. The boarders, orphans and day pupils carried wax tapers. The young lady who personated Saint Ursula wore a costly robe and a regal mantle of tissue of silver. Her crown glittered with pearls and diamonds, and a veil of the richest lace fell about her in graceful folds. She bore in her hand a heart pierced with arrows, made with wondrous skill. Fair children arrayed as angels surrounded her, and all waved palm branches, emblematic of the glorious victory won by the heroic virgin martyrs, whom they had the honor to represent.

At the end of the procession came the nuns with lighted candles, and the clergy carrying a rich canopy, under which the Most Blessed Sacrament was borne in triumph. Bienville and his staff, the Intendant of the province, Mr. Salmon, and the whole population formed their escort. The soldiers moved in single file on either side, about four feet from the procession. Hymns were sung by all, the accompaniment of fifes and drums making pleasing harmony; Brother Parisel, in surplice, acted as master of ceremonies, and perfect order and decorum gave to the display the last touch that crowns a thorough success.

This moving panorama of light, color and beauty halted between the Saint Louis Parish Church and the “Place d’Armes,” and defiled gracefully down the aisles of the church, the troops kneeling and presenting arms to do honor to the Blessed Sacrament. The nuns knelt within the sanctuary, and Father Philip placed the “Veiled Saviour” on

the altar, while soldiers, robed as acolytes, were swinging censers, from which arose delicate perfumes. The congregation remained prostrate till Father Petit, the orator of the occasion, ascended the pulpit. In a sermon, described as most eloquent by the nun whose facile pen has embalmed these precious details, he set forth the necessity and advantages of giving young persons a solid Christian education. In glowing words he congratulated the nuns on their labor to this great end, so conducive to the glory of God and the welfare of the colony. At the close of this touching address, the soldiers sang hymns, and Father Philip gave the Benediction.

When the procession wound out of the church, the torches and tapers were not superfluous; the sun was setting, but the afterglow remained for a while, burnishing the lofty trees and turning the mighty river into colors of molten gold. All drew up before the “Place d’Armes” and the bells of the new monastery rang out their merriest peals as the procession moved slowly in the deepening twilight.

“Thus did we enter our new abode,” writes Madeline Hachard, “amid the chiming of bells, the music of fifes and drums, and the singing of praise and thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father, whose loving Providence has lavished on us so many favors.”

And now let our imagination follow the nuns in their convent. Those who know the old monastery, our present Archbispopric, will be interested to know that the ground floor had a small chapel, two parlors, a room for the Mother Superiorress, refectories for the Sisters and the boarders, community rooms, kitchen,

scullery and pantry. On the next floor were the dormitories, infirmary, sacristy, linen room, wardrobe. The orphans occupied part of the upper story; the rest was used as an instruction room for colored women. At the same time the Indian Company erected a separate building for the sick, to which the patients were removed on the 20th of August, 1734. This addition was behind the convent, and faced Arsenal street, which changed its name to Hospital street. This convent sheltered the Ursulines for ninety years. In 1821, the nuns built a spacious monastery, three miles below the city. To this they removed, without ceremony of any kind, during the vacation of 1824. At first three nuns and a novice took up their abode in it on July 26th. Two weeks later several other Sisters and the boarders followed the superiorress and others remained in the city till the closing of the day-school in September.

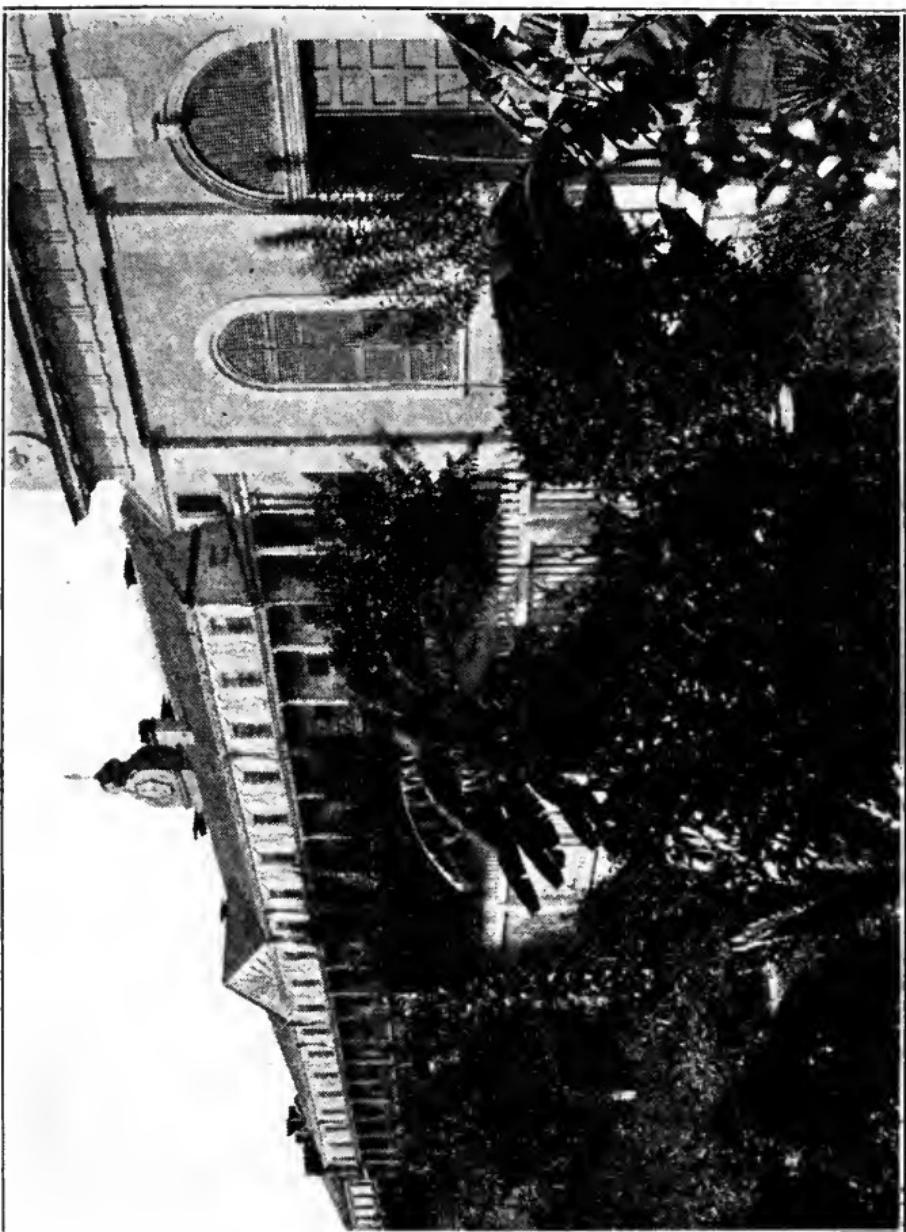
The early dwellers in the new home had many privations to endure; having no cooking apparatus, their meals were sent from the old house. Once their caterer did not come till evening, nor was his arrival a source of comfort, as he presented only empty dishes, his cart having upset on the way. Even at this time, depredations by Indians in the suburbs of the city were not unknown, and the nuns were so much afraid that they could not sleep. Finally, one of the bravest, Sister Marie Olivier, offered to keep watch while the others slept. But neither Indians nor other robbers made their appearance in her hours of patrol.



Photo C. M. C.

Courtesy of the Ursuline Ladies.

THE ACTUAL URSULINE CONVENT.



The old convent in Chartres street, which was abandoned by the Ursulines, saw various uses. In 1831 the Louisiana State House having been destroyed by fire, the Legislature rented the ancient edifice from the nuns, and held several sessions within its walls. Shortly after the lease expired the Ursulines presented it to the Archbishop of New Orleans as a place of residence.

It was so used until 1899, when a number of the Catholic clergy and laity purchased the old Slocomb residence in Esplanade avenue, and presented it to the late Archbishop Chapelle as a residence for the Archbishops of New Orleans. The historic old site in Chartres street is still known, however, as "the Archbishopric," and is used for the transaction of all the official business of the Archdiocese.

Though several times repaired, the venerable building has lost nothing of its antique aspect; all of its interesting features have been carefully preserved, and nothing of them has been sacrificed to the restless taste for modern comfort. Entering through the porter's lodge, in the door of which is the usual convent grating or "guichet," as it is called, a small garden is reached, and a good view is had of the venerable building, which was planned after the Tuscan composite style. Crossing the garden, the visitor enters by an old-fashioned porch a large vestibule, from which diverge several passages leading to the courtyard, the adjacent Saint Mary's Church, and to various parts of the building. The interior remains almost in its original state, with a curious old staircase, heavy doors, and cypress floors, the latter so worn that the ill-fashioned, old hand-

made nails protrude. The walls are several feet thick, and the beams and rafters, which the saw never touched, seem as strong as when they left the forest. In the dining room, which has natural panels of natural cypress, are several paintings, mostly pictures of the late prelates of the diocese.

On the second floor are the offices of the Archbishop, the library, the guest-rooms and the apartments of the Chancellor and other attendants of the Archiepiscopal household. The interior gallery opens on a square of green lawn, at the end of which has been erected a shrine to the Virgin. On the third floor of the building may still be seen the quaint little cells of the nuns, and the old-fashioned desk of the community room, at which the superioress sat and presided, when the nuns met for instruction and prayer. The entire building is covered with a heavy peaked roof.

Just at the corner of Hospital and Chartres streets, where a grocery now stands, was the ancient burial ground of the convent. When in 1824 the nuns removed to their new quarters, near the Barracks, the remains of the deceased members were disinterred and reburied in the cemetery attached to the present convent. But the bodies of the colored servants, who were interred in front of the convent, were never disturbed.

Saint Mary's Church, which flanks the old monastery on its left, has been built in the early part of the last century, as an adjunct to the Archbishopric. The church is in charge of the Chancellor, who acts as rector.

The three-story brick building which stands at

the right of the old convent was built under the administration of Archbishop Perché. It served as a dioecesan seminary for over a decade. It is now closed, and its solitude and desertedness harmonize, somewhat, with the sacred atmosphere of the old monastery, filled with the memories of the past.

And now, kind reader, that you have followed the gentle nuns from the country home of Bienville to their convent on Chartres street, and from Chartres street to their present location, at the lower end of the city; now that you have gone through the old monastery, noticing the ravages of time and changes made by men, let us pass through it a last time with the interest which arises from the knowledge of the past. Imagination will people these old walls in a moment.

There is the upper story, once used as an instruction room for the colored. Dusky girls and women came thither in crowds for instruction, advice and consolation. Thither, too, came the Indian women, with a world of sorrow in their large, dark eyes. Let us descend and look through the various apartments which were once occupied by the nuns and their pupils. We gaze on the clumsy gate with its small “grille” and quaint iron knocker, and think of those who passed through these faded portals. The early Capuchins and Jesuits, old “Father” Bienville, the honest Périer and his pious wife, and the first Ursulines of Louisiana. See how they crowd up from the past, not shadowy creatures from the twilight regions of romance, but beings, real and human, and working with heart and soul for future generations.

The “Grand Marquis” De Vaudreuil in gilted casque and heron plume, the pensive “Filles à la

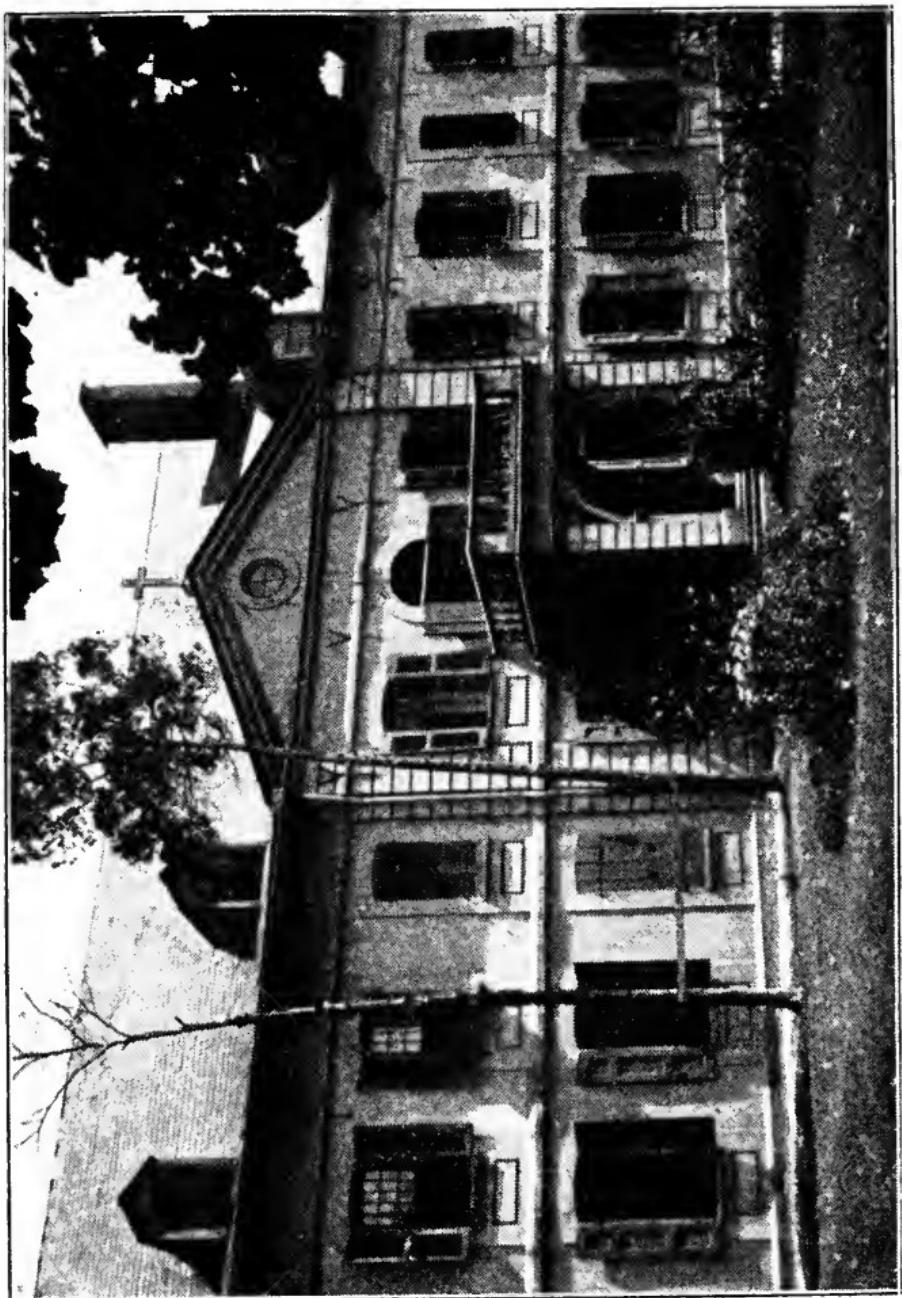


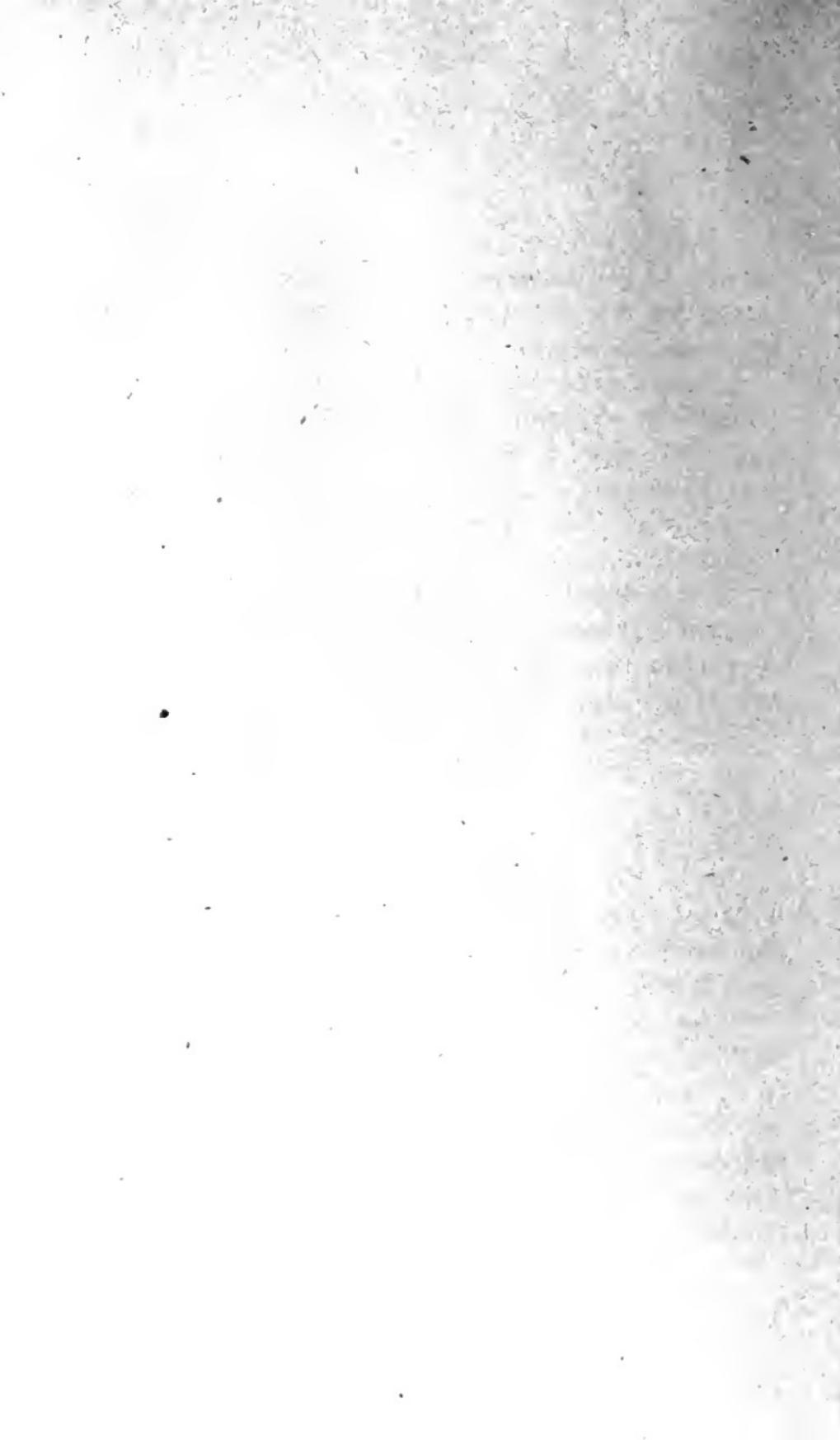
Photo B. Moore. THE OLD URSULINE CONVENT (ARCHBISHOPRIC).

cassette," the weeping Acadians, the chivalrous descendants of MacCarthy More, the scholarly Ulloa, the princely O'Reilly, the dashing Galvez; the lordly O'Farrell, the intellectual Bishop Penalver, the future King of France, Prince Louis Philippe, and his two brothers; Andrew Jackson, lean and haggard from midnight vigils, but illumined and glorified by his eagle eye; how they all come to memory in this hallowed spot, so full of religious and historic associations. What a sacred threshold indeed this is! Humble missionaries, chivalrous knights, stately dames crossed it daily. It saw painted and feathered Indians, stern squaws, negroes from the kraals of Africa, all came hither to be consoled or learn the secrets of a better land from those who had renounced the pleasures of the world for their sake.

The nuns have gone long since, never to return again; long since the young daughters of Creole lineage have ceased to fill these walls with life and merriment; on the nearby "Place d'Armes" the white banner of France was succeeded by the broad standard of Spain, which, in turn, was furled to give place to the glorious stars and stripes of young America. Still stands the old Ursuline Convent, by far the oldest building in New Orleans and all Louisiana, as well as the most venerably historic.

It was truly the cradle of religion and education in Louisiana. May these walls, which enclose so many souvenirs of our past, and whose perennial existence seems to defy the destructive hand of time, be preserved and remain a monument of Catholic work as long as the sun throws over them the magic splendor of its rays.

CENTENNIAL
GLORIES.



A CENTURY OF EPISCOPACY.

The Saint Louis Cathedral enjoyed the same privilege as the illustrious man who lives long enough to witness the lasting glory with which time crowns his immortal deeds.

Twice in the last twenty years has the Old Cathedral known triumphant days; twice in its honor flags and banners were unfurled, cannons boomed, and people by thousands crowded its spacious aisles to listen to orations whose echo sounded the poem of a victorious past.

On the 25th of April the Catholic See of New Orleans reached its hundredth year. The day dawned bright and beautiful, ideal in coloring and rich with the golden sunshine of the tropical spring time. The Old Cathedral, robed in its glory and amidst the ringing of bells and the booming of artillery, called the people to celebrate this great anniversary. From the Gulf of Mexico to far off Canada, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, the chimes of the Centennial Jubilee sounded, and New Orleans witnessed a civil and religious demonstration such as had rarely been seen in any city of the Union.

The erection of the Episcopal See of New Orleans in 1793 marked an event in the history of Louisiana; the celebration of its hundredth anniversary in 1893 chronicled a no less important page in the civil and religious records, for it witnessed a union of hearts and hands between clergy and laity, Church and State. Protestants and Catholics alike felt pride, be-

cause of the glory of the ancient days, the importance and standing of the See of New Orleans, and the immense influence for good the Catholic Church has proven in building up the civilization and intellectual thought in Louisiana.

For months the most elaborate preparations had been in progress for this centennial celebration. Under the auspices of Archbishop Janssens, the work took definite shape, meeting with immediate and emphatic approval not only from the vast body of Catholics in Louisiana, but also from distinguished government officials of our own and foreign countries.

Cardinal Gibbons, the beloved prelate who stands at the head of the Catholic hierarchy in America, Archbishop Ryan, the venerable and beloved pastor who enjoys the reputation of being the most renowned pulpit orator of the country, Archbishop Elder, so long and intimately associated with Mgr. Janssens in the field of Christian works, Very Rev. Canon Burchesi, who came as a delegate from the Archbishop of Montreal; these and twenty other distinguished bishops who were holding sway in what was formerly the See of New Orleans, gathered within the hospitable shades of the Old Cathedral, and when the centenary dawned New Orleans held within its walls the most notable dignitaries that had ever assembled since the foundation of the See.

The celebration proper began with the setting sun on Monday evening, when the Louisiana Battery Field Artillery fired a salute of fifty guns in honor of the occasion. The next morning a similar salute announced to the people of New Orleans that the long



Courtesy of Miss M. L. Points.

HIS GRACE MOST REV. F. JANSENS.

looked for day had arrived and the great celebration had begun. Flags and banners streamed in the breeze. The notes of martial music filled the air; the Old French Quarter seemed to have wakened to a new life and vigor, and from every direction the people poured down the narrow streets leading to the Old Cathedral to show their interest and pride in the great centennial. Every element of the community was represented in that heterogenous, cosmopolitan throng: rich and poor, high and low, white and colored, devout and curious, all pressed eagerly forward, packing the streets.

The Cathedral within and without told the story of the mile stone it had reached in its glorious history. The entire facade presented a patriotic display of the flags of all nations, hung in beautiful array from the Cathedral arch doorway clear across the streets on either side of the historic Pontalba buildings. And thus decked in patriotic and religious garb, the ancient Cathedral awaited the coming of the distinguished pageant. From the Archbishopric, the Old Ursuline Convent, moved a cortege as none has before issued from its gray walls. It was like the picture of the olden crusades dropped in the lap of the Nineteenth Century; acolytes and priests in cassock and surplice; bishops in royal purple, with miters and golden croziers; archbishops in ermine and flowing robes of silk and gold, and the brilliant red of the cardinal prince, all made up a scene grand, imposing and forever memorable in its character and historic features.

As the majestic pageant approached the great Cathedral, the doors flew open and mid the solemn

hush of the audience, the organ pealed forth with orchestral accompaniment and the great ecclesiastical parade entered the church to the swelling strains of the grand march from “Le Prophète”.

The solemn pontifical mass was offered by Archbishop Janssens himself with a brilliant retinue of assistants and in presence of the Cardinal, sixteen bishops and two archbishops.

After the Gospel, Father Hage, the eloquent and talented Dominican, delivered a French oration so admirable and appropriate to this glorious festivity that we cannot help giving it “in extenso” as the most befitting conclusion of this chapter.

Your Eminence, Messeigneurs, My Brethren—God has placed in the life of a people, as in the life of each individual, marked mile-stones, solemn monuments, which offer to the thoughtful mind food for meditation—the past, with all its struggles, its failures and its victories—the present, with its regrets and thanksgivings—the future, with its hopes and fears. That hour has sounded in the religious life of Louisiana. A century of existence; a century of the establishment and extension of this church! For all Catholics and Louisianians here is a subject worthy not only of the most profound reflections, but also of deepest joy and pardonable pride. And as Catholics and Louisianians, rejoicing in the ancient glory and grandeur of this church, you desire to mark the last moments of this centennial by a magnificent demonstration of faith and piety, by triumphant acclamations and songs of thanksgiving.

Yes! the hour which marks the close of a century is indeed a solemn one, and it is in honor of this hour that the Old Cathedral seems to grow young again with the grace and beauty of its first years. Her stateliness and grandeur dazzle our eyes, yet in this new garb we do not know which to most admire, the richness or the simplicity. Like the bride of which the Apocalypse speaks, she is robed in beauty and grace to celebrate worthily the memories of the bridegroom that God has given her. In honor of this hour a pious procession of priests and

laity have traversed the streets of this great city, amid the cheers of the joy of the people, and under the powerful shield of that great safeguard of your nation—freedom and liberty. In fine, it is to celebrate this hour that we have all assembled in this temple, and I see around me, in the government which they represent, the magistrates who honor and the militia who defend it; those whom the country counts as most illustrious.

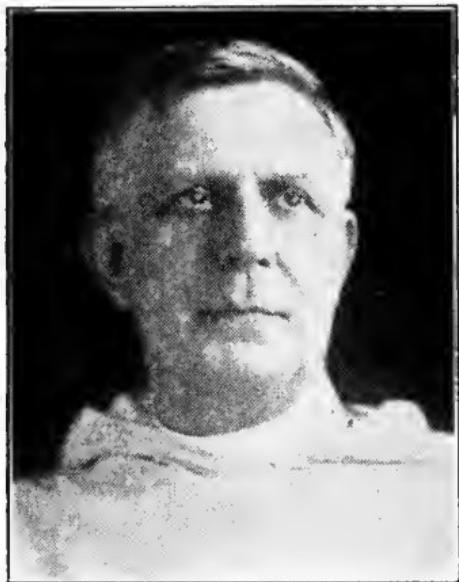


Photo B. de Villentroy.

VERY REV. H. HAGE.

you to her and to tell her that she is one, holy and indestructible.

Your Eminence, this festival today must recall to you the most beautiful and glorious memories. Only four years ago the see of the immortal Bishop Carroll shone with a new brightness. The first Catholic centenary of the United States attracted the attention of the entire world, and one might say on that day the church militant of America appeared triumphant. Your Eminence presided at that fête, and offered to God our common acts of thanksgiving.

And now, my brethren, it seems to me that to be faithful to my mission, I must consider with you this passing century

It is always beautiful to see the State respond to the call of the Church, as it is always beautiful to see the Church stretch out its hand to the State, that each may fulfill its destiny.

But it is towards yon, Messieurs, I turn, who above all direct the hearts of this assembly. Guardians of the divine troops, surrounding chieftains of twenty bishoprics, who, though a number are now detached from this metropolis, have nevertheless come to bring to your Mother the felicitations of her children, to bless the bond which unites

and the road to it traversed. It will be at the same time a recital and a proof; a recital of your combats and triumphs, your sufferings and joys, and a proof of the mercy of God, the blessings of religion and the vitality of the Church and the faith and piety of Louisiana. Two memorable dates present themselves for our reflection and divide this discourse into two parts—1793-1893.

The raillery and skepticism of the eighteenth century was nearing its decline. An agitation, amounting almost to a revolt, tormented the minds of men, and the day was not far distant when the impious doctrines of a furious populace plunged France into one of the most bloody catastrophes history has ever chronicled. '93 had come, and with it a train of persecutions, victims and deaths!

Strange coincidence, or rather happy disposition of divine wisdom, that offered a remedy for the great evils on the other side of the world, by sending the first bishop to this particular corner. The ideas of the mother country penetrated easily into a colony which could not forget its French origin. In Louisiana, then, was needed a guardian, an overseer, a bishop, and he was found in the person of Monseigneur Luis de Penalver y Cardenas. And thus the church extending her vigorous branches, sent in all directions the most hardy explorers, carrying with them the light of faith and the blessings of civilization. Quebec at the north, Baltimore on the east, and New Orleans on the south! These three names tell at once how the Church took definite possession of the American soil.

Founded in 1718, New Orleans had already completed sixty years of its existence when it was marked out as the See of a new bishop. Several religious communities had been established; the Capuchins and the Jesuits preached the Gospel to the people, while the Ursuline Nuns, who arrived in 1727, so intimately blended their lives with your own, that to recount their history is to recount the history of this city. What a picture it presents, this infant colony of France—struggling valiantly for its rights and defense, yet gradually learning to love and appreciate the Spanish domination, to which it, at length, submitted faithfully, while waiting for Louisiana to pass again into the hands of France. This happened, but scarcely had the echo gone forth, when Louisiana was transferred to the United States and shortly after admitted into the Union. Then began for

her an era of prosperity, because it was an era of full and entire liberty.

Such was the happy portion of the Church in the United States ; the privilege of developing under the guidance of its pontiffs and priests without having their actions shackled by the hatred of persecution or the tyranny which destroys. Rejoicing in this liberty and independence, she went bravely on, keeping her doctrines intact and her morals pure, attracting towards herself loyal and sincere hearts and walking ever under the guidance of the light of Christ, who governs it, and in obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff. More than eighty-six bishops, 8000 priests and 6,000,000 of children, form the forces of this pacific army of the church of America, and in face of this grand battalion, of which the ranks increase daily, I bow my head before their standard, upon which we may write these two words : “God and Liberty!”

Nevertheless this liberty was one day menaced in the history of Louisiana. It was on the 8th of January, 1815. That date recalls the most glorious combat that you ever sustained ; the day on which you maintained your independence. The English had ascended your beautiful river and stole upon you to take you by surprise, with bayonets in their hands and conquest in their hearts. We see the sight of the advancing hosts renewing the intrepidity of the ancient braves, and the faith of valiant Christians, as in the middle ages. And while the battle was raging in Chalmette, near here, in the chapel of the Ursuline Nuns the prayers rose heavenward. This battle of the power of prayer against the power of the sword has not been without example. In the heroic days of the thirteenth century a battle raged under the same conditions of the inferiority of host against host ; there, too, at Muret, in its courage and in its prayer, and Chalmette, like Muret, will tell to all generations what man may accomplish when God places in his hands his wisdom and all powerful guidance. Three thousand Americans repulsing 14,000 British, saving a city from the horrors of conquest and pillage, and retiring with ranks crowned with glory and hearts beating proudly and without reproach, left to their country the blessings of liberty and to God the honor of the victory. That same day the doors of the Old Cathedral opened before the most generous of these brave spirits – the second bishop of New Orleans, Mgr. Dubourg, received the con-

queror, who advanced with holy enthusiasm to the middle of the sanctuary and offered his grateful thanks and homage to the God of battles. That day General Jackson grew greater and more illustrious in the eyes of men, because, in the midst of his victory, he was humble before God, and when the stranger visits your city he leaves this church and looks upon the statue which faces it, and, drawing near, he is filled with thoughts which recall the only two forces in the world, the courage of the great and the prayers of the weak.

And now shall I bring to your minds other trials which have weighed heavily upon your shoulders; the scourges which decimated in a few hours your population, the inundations which ravaged your country and caused the most terrible distress? Shall I speak to you of that last civil war, of which the painful effects are still sadly echoing today? You know all this and you understand how the Church of Louisiana had her part in the sorrows and tears. But it is written that virtue finds its perfection in weakness, that trials beget patience, and patience salvation, and despite all the obstacles of men and things, behold this church of a century in age, appears before your vision happy in her past progress and confident in her success in the future. Yes, progress, for we have every reason to rejoice at the flourishing and extensive verifications of the record in this year of grace 1893. And above all, my brethren, God has preserved in your hearts the precious gift of faith. Nay, more, He has enriched this treasure and made it bear fruit, for His honor and glory and for your happiness.

It is a recognized and acknowledged faith among the ancient residents of Louisiana that faith and piety are stronger today than ever. The spirit of Voltaire and Rousseau, whose deadly poison was infiltrated into the minds of the preceding generation, have disappeared and given place not only to the actual and complete practice of religious duties, but also to the deepest respect and love for all that is holy and sacred. If there exists among some lukewarmness and forgetfulness, there are among all sincerity and a desire to do better. Yes, among all! for in the depths of your soul you guard the convictions which give a steady and luminous faith, which augment and prompt the most generous charities, and which constitute for you this day the most glorious title of children of the faith. I go a step further, and I find that this church of Louisiana enjoys the in-

estimable privilege of being honored and loved by hearts which were not of its fold, hearts in which it found confidence in its wisdom and help in its needs. Thanks for all these means which Divine Providence placed at its disposal, enabling it to develop and extend in all directions, bringing to the ignorant and uncivilized in the wildest regions the name and knowledge of the Most High, illuminating their minds with the light of faith and their hearts with the fire of divine love. In the first centuries of the Church, in proportion as its missionaries penetrated into the bosom of infidel countries and converted the inhabitants to the religion of Christ, the authorities of Rome placed above these bishops to guide and direct, and the creation of an episcopal see was the most powerful proof of the progress and conquests of the church. In our day this proof has lost none of its ancient force.

Let us glance around at the first territory that was confided to the jurisdiction of the first bishop of New Orleans. It not only comprised all Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida but also the immense district extending west from the great Mississippi river to the Rocky Mountains. Today, twenty-five bishops hold sway in this region, twenty-five great cathedrals rise majestically heavenward as branches of that church, old yet ever new, radiant with hope, filled with the strength of its early years, and growing each day under divine guidance, as the hope and consolation and victory of its people. And here, also, in New Orleans, my brethren, what signs of progress do we not see ? What has become of the little village of 300 souls that was founded by Bienville ? What a splendid subject could have been reserved for my discourse if it had not been given me to speak of the material development of your city.

Is it not evident on all sides, even from a human point of view, that you owe to God the great proportion of your present glory and prosperity ? But there is another subject to which I wish to draw your attention. I have already spoken to you of the condition of the parishes, and of the religious community which Mgr. de Penalver found established on his arrival in this city.

Cast a glance, now, at this entire diocese, and admire with me the flourishing conditions of these visible signs of a Christian country. Parishes have multiplied ; more than a hundred and

ten throw open each Sunday the doors of their temples for the worship of the faithful, and subserve the spiritual necessities of three hundred thousand Catholics. Religious orders of men and women are all represented in your diocese; the Sons of Saint Benedict, the disciples of Saint Alphonsus, the Lazarists and Marists and Fathers of the Holy Cross, Ursulines and Carmelites, Dominicans and Benedictines, Marianites of the Holy Cross, the Family of the Immaculate Conception, Ladies of the Sacred Heart and Sisters of Saint Joseph, in fine, all these good congregations and many others, administer to every need of the people, and find an answer for every sorrow, a remedy for every suffering, a consolation and hope in every trial. And what answer does Louisiana give to the magnificent work of Catholic education—86 parochial schools and 15 colleges accommodate each day more than 12,000 children, and give them not only a thorough knowledge of profane science, but also the higher and more important science of divine truth.

Look around at the grand orphanages of this State; their magnificent institutions that pick up the poor, parentless children and rear them in love and tenderness with the care and solicitude of a true Christian mother; those Catholic asylums, where tutelary walls offer them a home and protection under the shadow of the cross until they are strong enough to fight their own battles in the great race of life. And that home, built for the poor and aged and infirmed, that home for the weary soul left in second childhood homeless and alone, with eyes turned lovingly towards the tomb; that home whose doors are open to shelter and protect them, and which ceases not its tender watchful care till brightening the darkening evening of life, till the weary eyes are shut to its sorrows and open to the brightness of the day. The words of the Saviour are verified to the letter: "You have always the poor amongst you." These words are understood in New Orleans, and a holy emulation animates religious and laity to present to the all-pervading sorrows and miseries of life the strong and powerful phalanx of charity. And to what do we owe these handsome results? That remains for me to tell you.

To whom, did I say? To yourselves, my brethren. Yes, I am happy to have learned and happy to have the privilege of saying that among you there live ancient Creole families whose virtuous examples and deep respect for Christian traditions have

successfully seconded the Church in all its efforts for the advancement of faith and morals and education. Descended from French or Spanish ancestors, they have preserved those ideas of right and justice, chivalrous sentiments and ardent faith, and holy spirit of piety which are indelible characteristics of their two mothers, the countries separated by the Pyrénées.

And with you we owe a debt of gratitude to those zealous and indefatigable priests and missionnaries who explored this country in every direction, grasping souls from the darkness of error and ignorance and sin. What trials and labors they underwent to redeem the soil of souls, more ungrateful and rebellious than the soil of daily toil for existence, traversed by the feet of man. They were received and lived in the midst of poverty, and many will recall that one of these heroic men, named Père Antoine, lived near this Cathedral in a miserable cabin, from which he directed the hearts of the people in the love and fear of God, and the light radiated from that lowly hut still shines in Louisiana to-day; all of which proves that the people understood the voice of self-abrogation and loved and honored those who practiced it. And about these priests and laity of the Church of Louisiana I see, like a speaking picture, the new bishops and archbishops which it pleases God to place above them as pastors.

In this great church of New Orleans, among the principal who occupied its episcopal chair were Mgr. Penalver, whose love and charity towards the poor was proverbial; Mgr. Dubourg, that man of great merit and letters, whose eloquence and wisdom was tempered by the sweetness of the Gospel light; Mgr. Odin, that sainted archbishop and man of duty, who united the delicacy of the true gentleman with the simplicity of the early apostles, and whose long episcopate was marked by the most numerous benefactions; Mgr. Perché, who was the personification of kindness, and who could never close either his purse or his heart to those who appealed to him; Mgr. Leray, whose prudent and wise administration makes him remembered as a wise and worthy prelate, who exemplified in every phase of his brilliant career the bishops of the early Gospel; and lastly rises the picture of the reigning archbishop of New Orleans, and at once you would call me incapable and ungrateful, my brethren, if I did not present to him, in your behalf, the sentiments of esteem, affection and filial veneration which you would

offer him on this beautiful day. Yes, Monseigneur! As pontiff and father, this festival should fill your heart with joy. Your children, bishops, priests and faithful, have all gathered about you to tell you this diocese of Louisiana constitutes only one soul in God and for God. Your works stand around in every village and hamlet to testify to the wisdom of your government, and the vigorous growth of your apostle. Like Mary singing her canticle of praise, you also may intone the canticle of thanksgiving.



“MUTANTUR IMPERIA, ECCLESIA DURAT.”

Ten years after its centennial the Old Saint Louis Cathedral assumed again a patriotic garb to witness the centenary of the Purchase of Louisiana from France by the United States. The same notable display of flags was made on the facade of the venerable building; the same bright draperies floated across its arched aisles. There was, however, a marked difference between these two grandiose festivities; the first marked the celebration of a day which stood for the immutability of the Church, the latter marked an anniversary which showed the mutability of the nations. One spoke of God, the other of man, and the significance of the festival was illustrated by the following inscription on a beautiful shield which was hung above the main entrance of the Church: “Mutantur Imperia, Ecclesia Durat;” “Empires or governments change, but the Church lasts.”

Such a gathering as the one that assembled in the Cathedral on this memorable day had seldom before been seen within its dim gray walls. It was

not only the rich setting of priests and acolytes in cassocks and surplices, bishops in mantelleta with miters and gilded croziers, the Archbishop in cappa magna, but also the navy and diplomatic corps of the three illustrious nations under whose domination Louisiana had successively passed: France, Spain and the United States.

The chief feature of the entire ceremony, the one that left the deepest impression and aroused the greatest admiration, was the magnificent oration that Father de la Morinière delivered after the Gospel at the High Mass. Himself a Louisianian and a child of the City of the Purchase, Father de La Morinière could enter into the theme as few could; his discourse, showing the work of the Church in the up-building and christianizing of the children of the primeval forests and the zeal of the pious missionaries who dotted the land of the Purchase with the emblem of Christianity from the Gulf to the Great Lakes, together with his prayer of thanksgiving, was one of the most stirring sermons ever heard in the Old Cathedral. Father de la Morinière spoke as follows:

It is singularly appropriate, and in striking and touching harmony with the traditions and early chronicles of Louisiana that the Catholic Church should claim a right royal share in this day's rejoicings, shed the halo of her sacred presence upon this gathering of noble men and noble women, and consecrate by the splendor of her ceremonies and the magnificence of her ritual our loyal endeavors to celebrate, as it deserves, the one hundredth anniversary of our transferred allegiance from the tricolor of France to the Stars and Stripes of the United States of America. For none but the wilfully blind or unaccountably ignorant can fail to catch glimpses of her authority, mark her activity and trace her influence on our coast already in the



Photo Teunisson.

A MEMORABLE PROCESSION.

dawn of those centuries of colonization which preceded the consummation which we now commemorate.

It was her palladium raised in hope and confidence over the head of the daring explorer that made unflinching his resolve, unyielding his nerve, stout his heart, strong his arm and unwavering his step in his irksome march and perilous enterprise. It was her ministering care that smoothed his path and softened his hardships. It was her voice crying onward and forward that urged him on when faltering nature whispered halt and rest. It was the light of that divine faith which she flashed along his dismal way which scattered the shadows conjured up so often by despondency and despair. It was the lofty and supernatural aim that she held before his eager gaze that transformed his mission into an apostolate. It was her hands clasped in supplicating prayer that crowned his efforts seemingly unavailable and ultimate and unlooked-for success. It was her selfless devotion which oft shielded him from harm, encompassed him by night and day, through flood and field, the trackless waste and stormy sea, like a mother's unspoken benediction. It was the welcomed consciousness that she would be at his side, within his reach, in the person of her minister ready to strengthen him if he grew faint, to cheer him if he drooped, to shrive him if he fell and to open Heaven to him if he died, which gave to many a yonth born and bred in Luxnry, basking in the sunshine of comfort and the smiles of fortune, courage to leave home and native land, sever the strongest ties of blood and friendship, forego the laughter of mirth and the gay revels of ancestral halls, in order to brave the baneful effects of unwholesome climes, plow the broad bosom of the ocean and, in frail bark canoes, the unfriendly surface of inland lakes; plod over the Indian trail through summer's blistering rays and winter's ice-laden blasts; in a word, to dare the deeds and achieve the feats which have rendered famous, in the bead-roll of the world's heroes, the names of not a few among the early pioneers of our cherished Louisiana.

But alas and alack! The jaundiced eye of prejudice has not failed to look askance at the motives which prompted the monarchies of Spain and France to spread the fold of their flag over portions of far-off lands and dispatch armed bands to tread the great arteries of our continent. A popular writer did not scruple to speak of the wild and predatory nature of those

expeditions which added large possessions to the impoverished exchequers of the distant and greedy rulers, and of the heroic explorers themselves as an unbridled and unprincipled horde, delighting in roving incursions and extravagant exploits, and in whose eyes no gain was so glorious as the cavalgada of spoils and captives driven in triumph from a plundered province,

while religion herself was branded as lending her aid to satisfy these ravaging propensities. We are asked to believe that it was the spirit of Spanish chivalry, which, bred up to daring adventure and heroic achievements, and ill-brooking the tranquil and regular pursuits of common life, panted for new fields of romantic emprise, that sent the Castilian cavalier to the caravel of the discoverer, and not this longing to do yeoman's service in the cause of God and the propagation of the faith. On the other hand, an unsuspected author has boldly declared



Photo C. M. C.

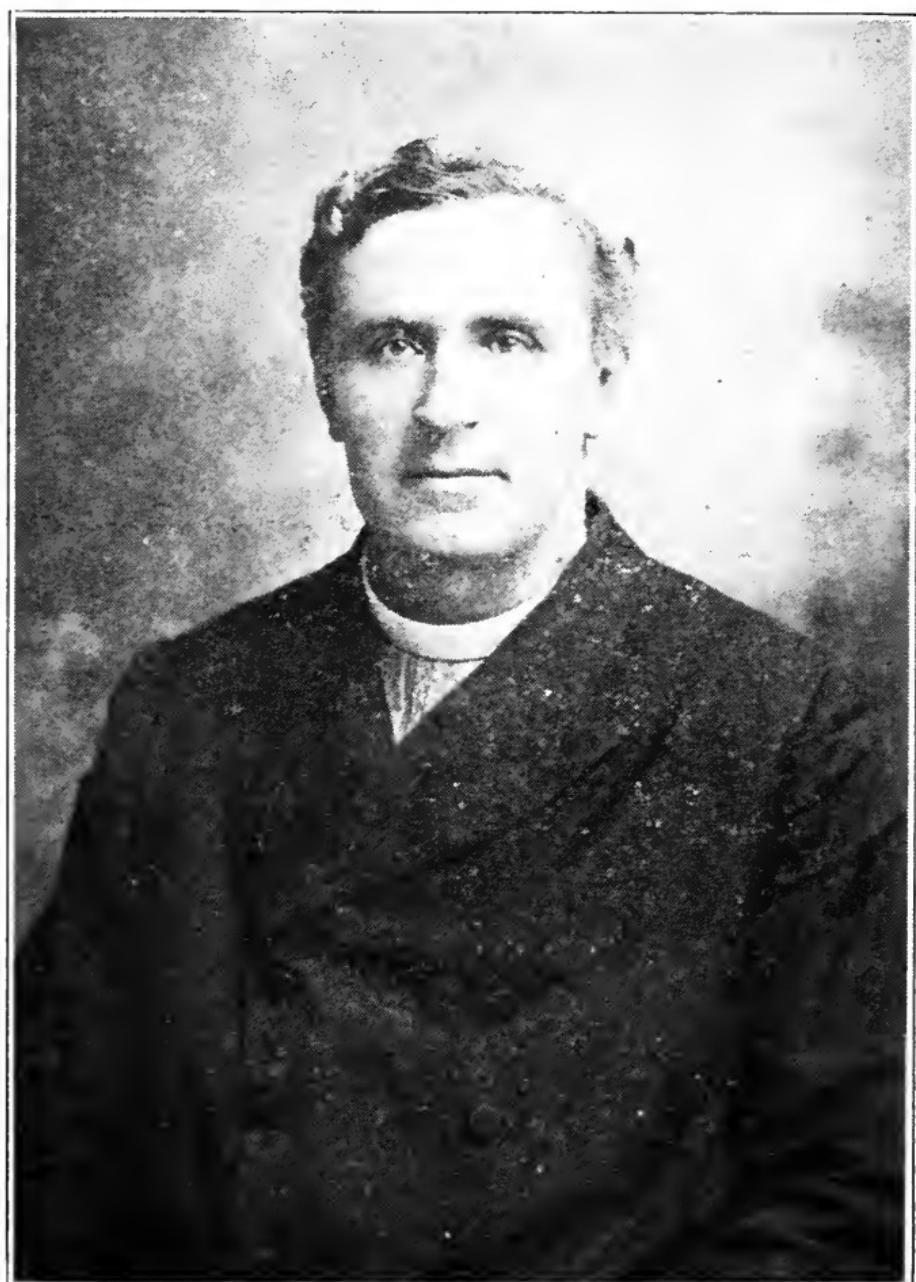
REV. E. DE LA MORINIÈRE.

that it would not be giving a fair view of the great object proposed by the Spanish sovereigns in their schemes of discovery to omit one which was paramount to all the rest. And what is that? The spreading of Christianity and the conversion and civilization of a simple people. This statement of Prescott, in a well-known work, is substantiated by facts than which, as we are aware, nothing is more stubborn. In a letter indited as far back as 1521, Ponce de Leon, of Florida fame, informs his august patron and master that he returns to that island if it be God's will to settle it, "that the name of Christ may be praised there and Your Majesty served with the fruit that land produce." In no other vein is couched the King's patent to Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon in 1523, two years after: "Our primal intent in the discovery of new lands is that the natives thereof be brought to the truth of our holy Catholic faith, become

Christians and be saved; and this is the chief motive you are to hold in this affair, and to this end it is proper that religious persons should accompany you." It is the chief condition of the King's grant to Hernando de Soto in 1538, "that he should carry and bear with him the religions and priests who shall be appointed by us for the instruction of the natives of that province in our holy Catholic faith."

Small wonder, then, that side by side with that noble knight and true Christian whose mortal remains rest in peace within that oaken trunk scooped out by his companions, and by them sunk many fathoms deep in the bed of the Mississippi; small wonder that side by side with Hernando De Soto, on the unknown and hitherto unexplored soil of Louisiana, stand the minister of Christ and the anointed representative of the Church. The hood and the cowl and the robe of brown or gray mingle their sombre hue with the resplendent brightness that shoots and glances from the burnished armors and polished weapons of the sons of Spain. Through the long vistas of slender pines and stately oaks the cross is held aloft above the sweeping pageantry of iron heels and gilded spurs. The pennant of Castile is seen fluttering low before the emblem of salvation. A trumpet signal, and the plumed crested warriors give willing knee to the adorable host of the eucharistic sacrifice offered by the officiating priest at an improvised altar, reared beneath the swaying boughs of that vast sylvan solitude.

And if we pass the Spanish hidalgo to the French chevalier, everywhere the scene is the same. From the Gulf of Mexico to the lakes of Canada and the headwaters of the St. Lawrence, religion and chivalry, gowned priest and belted knight, marching hand in hand to the conquest, civilization and evangelization of new worlds. The merry ringing, for a whole day, of the Quebec, in 1675, the soulful chanting of the "Te Deum" by the bishop, the clergy and entire population because the Jesuit Marquette had discovered the mouth of the giant river which fertilizes these shores, besides telling us how our European fathers deemed it their first duty to give thanks to the divine Arbiter of human destiny for whatever success attended their perilous efforts in the toils and hardships of exploration, voice in language more impressive and more grandly eloquent than human speech the most gifted can ever hope to command, the deep concern of the Catholic Church in every befalling of the



RIGHT REV. MGR. J. M. LAVAL.

nascent colony, and the close interweaving of their common interests. In tones no less, nay still more striking, is the same truth proclaimed by the exultant strains of that mighty chorus of praise to the Most High, which, on the night of January, 1682, leaped to the starlit sky from the throats of noble and plebeian, priest and soldier, shook the leafy walls of nature's temple, and started the slumbering echoes of a Louisiana wilderness when Robert Cavelier de la Salle, in the name of the most puissant, most invincible and victorious Prince, Louis the Great, King of France, unfurled the white banner to the breeze, and nailed to the column he had planted the royal escutcheon. You cannot summon in fancy the towering figure of Iberville, the fearless Commander of the Pelican; of Bienville, his distinguished and valorous brother, to whom our city of New Orleans owes its existence; of Sanville, the most accomplished of that noble trio of brothers, without resting your mind's eye upon the saintly figures of those priests of Jesus Christ, Montigny and Davion, and others of their cloth, who shared the varied fortunes of those matchless leaders, and furnished by their labors, in behalf of the untutored savage of the wilds, materials for the most thrilling narrative.

"I tell you this morning, with all the earnestness I may possess, that you might as well try to shear the sun of his beams, to strip the moon of her silver mantle, to pluck by the roots yon Rocky Mountains, to check the flow or drain the basin of the Mississippi River, as to sever the tie which binds the Catholic Church to Louisiana from the very moment when the settler's axe cleared her tangled forests, and the navigator's sail opened to the traffic of the world her countless watercourses. I tell you that if we, whose infancy was cradled on her soil, whose youth was reared and nurtured in her schools, whose manhood ripened in the day of her Statehood, amid the marvels of her development, if we should ever, may God forbid, forget the honor and the fidelity and the obedience we owe to the Catholic Church, the very stones of our streets, the vary sands of our shores, the very blades of grass on our remaining prairies would find tongues to reproach us with our recreancy and ingratitude, while the bones of our fathers that molder in our cemeteries beneath the shadow of the cross would rattle with indignation in their graves at the conduct of their traitor sons. Aye, traitors! For remember, Louisianians of the twentieth century,

remember that the blood of your sires and the blood of the Catholic Church may be said to have mingled their ruddy streams when in the eighteenth century the French missionaries and their flock were by the slaughtered hands of the Natchez tribes made to fill a common grave.

But, although the wise Governor of all things has hidden the future from the ken of our feeble understanding, and our clearest conceptions of what may happen are involved in doubt, yet, judging of things to come by their predecessors, it may not be rash to prophesy that the calamitous day will never be on record against us. For, from the gleamings of history, I seem to witness the glad and enthusiastic welcome given in 1699 to their first resident chaplain by the first French settlement in Louisiana at that little post built by Iberville at Biloxi. Uncontrollable emotion convulsed the frames of strong men and bathed with tears of joy and gratefulness the cheeks of frail women when they realized that there now was in their midst one who would soothe their sorrows, share their trials, a priest who would pardon their sins, baptize their children, join them in Christian wedlock, anoint them in the last illness with the sacred oils, and whisper the blessings of the Church over their freshly dug graves.

Aud when, in 1718, at the command of that peerless organizer, Bienville, whose searching glance had marked the glorious possibilities and foreseen the future greatness of our emporium, fifty gigantic sons of the forest were laid low to make room for the foundation of New Orleans, what is it that led to the projected city the dwellers of the Mississippi Valley ? The facilities for import and export, doubtless, which the plan afforded, but chiefly, I believe, the eager wish of their Catholic hearts to build their rough homesteads within the shadow of those sanctuaries which they knew must, at no distant period, dot that strip of promised land. They were not doomed to disappointment. The wooden crosses erected in the fields and public thoroughfares and roads soon yielded space for the construction of churches and chapels, and the year 1723 saw on the street named Chartres, after the ducal son of the French regent, and within stone's throw of the fronting "Place d'Armes," a wooden cross which, soon swept away by the breath of the hurricane, was replaced in 1725 by a more elaborate structure, from whose ashes the munificent bounty of that philanthropic prince, Don

Andres Almonester y Roxas, made to spring, in 1793, that boast and pride of our city, that faithful depository of our tradition, that majestic witness of all the memorable events of our history, that venerable theatre of the most glowing scene in our civil and religious annals, the Saint Louis Cathedral, within whose storied walls we are now assembled, under the leadership of the most distinguished prelate who has ever graced its archiepiscopal throne, to invoke the divine blessing upon our Southland.

But in 1725 the Cathedral bells, now "nestling in their lofty steeples," had not sung the paens of victory to the Christian colonists. Through winds and floods, pestilence and famine, fire and countless calamitous visitations, the Church was striving to get a surer footing and plant her standard more firmly in the rising city of Bienville. She was busy reeniting her ranks from foreign seminaries to cope with the increasing needs of a growing population. She husbanded jealously all her resources, multiplied her endeavors to reach by her ministrations the humblest of Christ's flock, and especially the waifs and strays of life that were wandering far from her protecting arms. The education of young girls was sorely neglected. The mother country was appealed to, and across the billowy main she reached out her helping hand to her imploring children. Conformably to a contract with the West India Company, eight valiant Ursuline Nuns, whose number was soon to increase to nineteen, landed at New Orleans on the 6th of August, 1727, to begin the work of education and charity which has been continued under five different national flags in its existence of more than a century and a half, and has trained in their academies those accomplished daughters of the South, whose Christian graces are an honor to their country as well as to their skillful and devoted teachers. A rare sight and a welcomed one must that procession have been which escorted the daughters of Saint Ursulato their newly finished convent, on Ursuline street, which is the oldest building in the city and the oldest conventional structure within the limits of our Republic.

A Capuchin father, with two Jesuits as his assistants, bearing the blessed sacrament under a canopy; the veiled nuns, in choir mantles, following; the Governor and his staff immediately after; then the citizens, preceding the military force of the colony, whose drums and instruments blended their



Photo B. Moore.

HIS EXCELLENCE MOST REV. LOUIS P. CHAPELLE.

sounds with the religious chants as they moved along. A rare and soul-lifting sight, that to which, however, I would not have called your attention were it not for the treasured lesson which it teaches: The profound and public homage paid by the civil power to the Church and her ministers and to the members of our Catholic sisterhood. Neither would I allude to the sons of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, who, together with the sons of Saint Francis, ministered to the spiritual wants of the infant city, were it not to say, with landable pride, that their work in your midst today for the training of the young and the service of the altar is instinct, with the same unselfish, self-sacrificing and patriotic love for Louisiana as that which quickened the pulses and fired the souls of their pioneer brothers in 1762. At that period the tread of events was about to turn and affairs were fast speeding to a crisis. For reasons detailed by historians the mother-milk could no longer in sufficient draughts reach the lips of the nursling, and Louis XV was advised to give it into hands better able to provide it with the necessary nourishment. Under seeming cover of affection and friendship for his "Cousin of Spain," but in reality under pressure of circumstances, he ceded "to him and his successors all the country known under the name of Louisiana," and thus the much-enduring population, which had overcome so many perils under the flag of France, was coldly delivered over to the yoke of foreign masters.

It is not hard to imagine the conflicting emotions aroused in the breasts of our forefathers by the unexpected news which reached New Orleans in 1764. They loved their French descent and dependency. They were proud of their language, and attached to their laws, manners, customs, habits and government. The treaty of Fontainebleau had been secret. Neither had their wishes been consulted nor their consent solicited, so they chafed under a sense of wrong sure to break out into reprisals at which, while we deplore them, we can in no way marvel. I glide over that touching incident in which on bended knees the aged and feeble Bienville, like a father sning for the life of his child, vainly pleaded with France not to strip herself by one stroke of the pen of those boundless possessions which she had acquired at the cost of so much heroic blood and so much treasure, and which extended in one proud, uninterrupted line from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to that of the Mississippi.

I glide over that dark episode, the insurrection of 1768, which closed with the public execution of the chief abettors, to bid you view in spirit the scene enacted on this very square, when, amid the pealing of bells and the roaring of cannon from the Spanish fleet, and the discharge of guns by the land troops, and the waving of banners, and the beating of drums, and the clanging of trumpets, General O'Reilly took possession of this colony in the name of his Catholic Majesty, and the flag of France sank from the head of the mast where it waved, and was replaced by that of Spain. When on that day both Governors and their retinues were received by the clergy in this Cathedral, then the Church of Saint Louis, where a solemn "Te Deum" was sung, be pleased to observe that it was again the Church who poured oil over the troubled waters by pleading to the new administration the loyal submission of her children; a submission which ripened to ardent love and devotion during the thirty-three years in which the flag of Spain floated over our city and country.

Bnt of those colonial days, whose memory shall only vanish from our midst when the last of those relies and monuments which breathe their spirit and speak of their quaint and romantic grandeur shall have been leveled with the dust by the unsparing hand of time; to those days the gratitude of our ancestors bade a tender, if not a wholly regretful, farewell when, in 1803, Louisiana found herself no longer a portion of the Spanish monarchy, nor yet^{of} of the French Republic, to which she was receded for a brief span, but part and parcel of the great American Republic.

Mine is not the task on this Centennial Day to say how the purchase of the Louisiana Territory is, next to the Declaration of Independence and the formation of the Constitution which made us a nation, the greatest event in American history; how, nearly doubling the area of the United States by adding territory equal to the combined area of Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, for the sum of \$15,000,000, which the Titan Bonaparte deemed a fair price, it was the greatest real estate speculation which the world has ever seen; how it was the most noteworthy political move, averting probable fierce and long conflicts, waste of life, destruction of property and retardation of progress, I leave those facts to the statesman, the financier and the diplomat. Mine is not even

the task to unfold the giant strides made in the course of a century by the intellectual civilization of which the bar, the medical profession, the literary and scientific circles, nay every class, every interest, every fireside, gives unquestionable tokens. I turn to thoughts more in accord with my theme. I trace the luminous finger of God in the progress of his Church in Louisiana through these hundred years which divide us from the consummation of that great purchase. To you, Catholics, I say, look around you, and while you marvel at the contrast between now and then; while you marvel at the growth and development of your religion in the city of New Orleans, let your hearts brim over with gratefulness. Let your lips hymn forth a song of praise "For the things which the right hand of the Almighty hadh done in Sion."

Count your numbers and be glad that from a mere handful it has swollen to 375 000 in this Archdiocese. The roll of the Catholic clergy which counted twenty-six in town and country, boasts of more than 220 faithful shepherds tending the flock of Jesus Christ in those 199 churches sprung from the soil under the magic wand of charity and zeal. Twenty-two thousand and four hundred and sixty-three is the number of young people under Catholic care. Five colleges and academies for boys and seventeen for young ladies, train your sons and daughters in the higher grades of study. Orphan asylums and hospitals and homes for the aged poor shelter the weak and the sick and the destitute. A hundred years! And how the little grain of mustard seed has sprouted up and branched forth into the sheltering, spreading tree! A hundred years! If from their seats on high, Heaven's dwellers are, as we believe, permitted a view of human concerns, the sight of those devout worshipers, men, women and children, who throng our altar rail on Sundays and festivals, must fill the blessed soul of the Bishop Penalver with far more different feelings than those which prompted these words to Bishop Carroll: "Not more than a quarter of the population of the town ever hear mass. A hundred years and the Catholic Church, that great creation of God's power stands in this land in the pride of place. She energized through ten thousand instruments of power and influence. She wears her honors thick upon her venerable brows, enthroned among us in a See which, in this Republic, is second only to that of Baltimore."

And here, a vision of ten mitred heads passes before me. Their glance sweeps in gladness through this vast assemblage. Representatives of France and Spain, and of America, Penalver, Dubourg, Rosati, Neckere, Blaue, Odin, Perché, Leray, Janssens, welcome you to this Cathedral, from whose bell-towers rang out the first joyous peals that, on the twentieth day of December, 1803, welcomed the American flag waving within sight of its portals in its fronting square. Catholics of New Orleans, your departed Fathers in God salute you, while with uplifted finger they point in pride to their pontifical successor, and bid you mingle your voices in a concert of praise to our Lord Jesus Christ who has vouchsafed to bestow a priceless gift upon the Church of New Orleans in the person of his Excellency Most Reverend Archbishop Chapelle. Your Excellency, your learning and prudence, equalled only by your piety and zeal, have achieved a success foreseen by our lamented Holy Father, Leon XIII, when he chose you, among all your emporched peers, for one of the most difficult missions in the records of ecclesiastical diplomacy. The fame which your Excellency has won on these foreign fields of apostolic delegation, beside shedding on the history of this archdiocese a lustre which will forever emblazon its pages, it is to your devoted children an earnest that in your saintly and skilful hands the banner of Christ is marching to fresh victories and fresh conquests in the opening day of this new century of the Louisiana Purchase. Yet, while giving thanks, we cannot wholly forget that the sun of our prosperity was not unclouded by the shadows of disaster. The Ruler of the Universe, who in the language of the Psalmist, "Exalteth the Nations," is sometimes pleased, for reasons known only to His inscrutable providence, to test them in crucible trials. Louisiana proved no exception to that rule. The rods of affliction which threatened to scourge the shoulders of our forefathers were stayed in their fall by the appointed arm of that great soldier, Jackson, who on the memorable twenty-third day of January, 1815, crowned in this very temple with a laurel wreath from the hands of Abbé Dubourg, offered public homage to the God of armies for the victory which had perched upon his standard, and had freed New Orleans from British invasion. But there was no appointed arm to drive back the rushing tide of that other war which raged and roared during four long years of alternate joy and grief, hopes and fears, reverses and

successes, exultation and despair; during four long years which like a deep red trail of our best Southern blood, stretched from Sumter to Appomattox. Yet:

O Gracious God! not gainless is the loss!
A glorious sunbeam glides thy sternest frown.

For the curtain has fallen long ago on those mournful scenes of carnage, and thy hand has beautified and comforted and healed, until there is nothing left of those calamitous days but graves and garlands, and monuments, and veterans, and precious memories. And we still give thanks. For we have been built into a sturdier race by the example and the memory of those of our fathers and brothers who were the bravest men that ever girt sword or shouldered musket; the most knightly warriors that cannon-signal or trumpet-flourished ever summoned to bloody fields; men whose spirits never faltered, whose hearts never quailed, whose courage never wavered; whose resolve never failed through four bitter years of recurring failure; and whose self-sacrifice, self-denial and indomitable ardor have no parallel in the annals of any nation.

We still give thanks, for in brotherly love we now clasp each other's hands above the dark chasm of an unfortunate past. We owe legal allegiance to a united country. The same flag sweeps in mighty over our heads, and we do common homage to its folds which command respect for the American name on sea and land.

In a moment, the voice of pontiff, priests and people will rise to the throne of grace in humble acknowledgment of favors received, and in fervent pleading for new blessings. When the strains of that solemn "Te Deum" shall have died along the vaults of this Cathedral, on the very spot where it floated high for the first time, one hundred years ago, you will again raise that flag. Let its voice be heard. Let it be heard beyond the limits of this city, beyond the limits of this territory. Let it be wafted to where the nation sits in council to tell this one, indivisible, imperishable Republic that among all the stars that gem its diadem of States none shines more brightly, none more steadily, none more faithfully, none more loyally than that of Louisiana, purchased by Thomas Jefferson from Napoleon Bonaparte, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and three.

One hundred and fifteen years have elapsed since the Saint Louis Cathedral was solemnly dedicated by Don Patricio Walsh, Foreign Vicar for the Bishop of Havana,—and still she stands in our midst, majestically towering the very heart of this City. The visitor looking upon her is at once impressed with her age and dignity, and seeks to wrest from her the history of bygone days. She is the ancestor of all the churches of the entire Louisiana Purchase. Under her beneficent shadow four and five generations have grown to manhood.

A few feet from her portico, the soldiers both of France and Spain unfurled their standards, and General Jackson crossed her threshold with the laurels of victory still fresh on his brow.

Her vaulted arches from time to time re-echoed the solemn strains of the “Te Deum,” and the plaintive tones of the “Miserere.”

From her pulpit, men gifted with soul stirring eloquence attracted the elite of a society that knew better days.

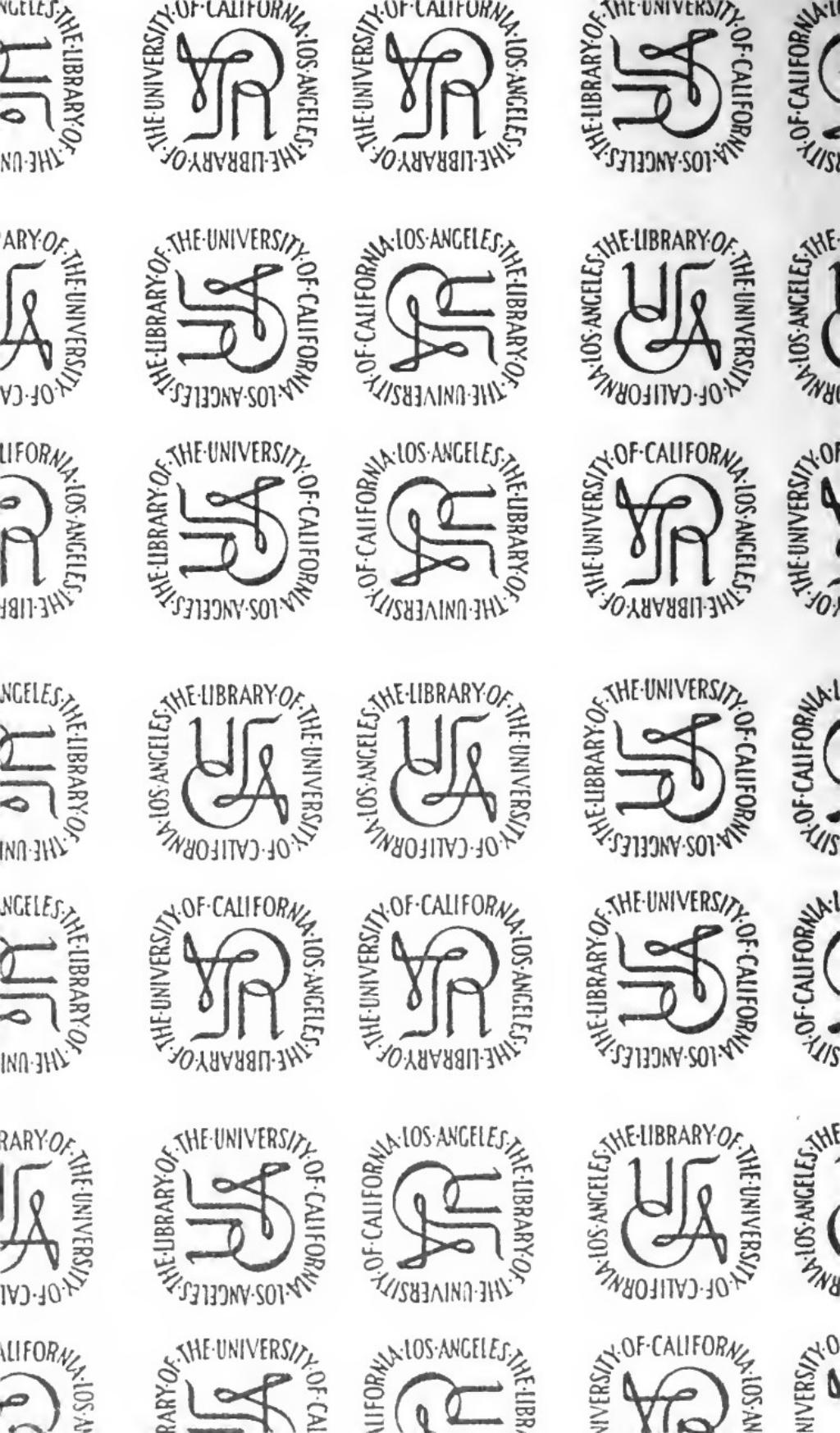
Beneath the cold flagstones of her sanctuary repose many a grand sire of the past generations.

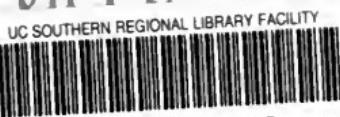
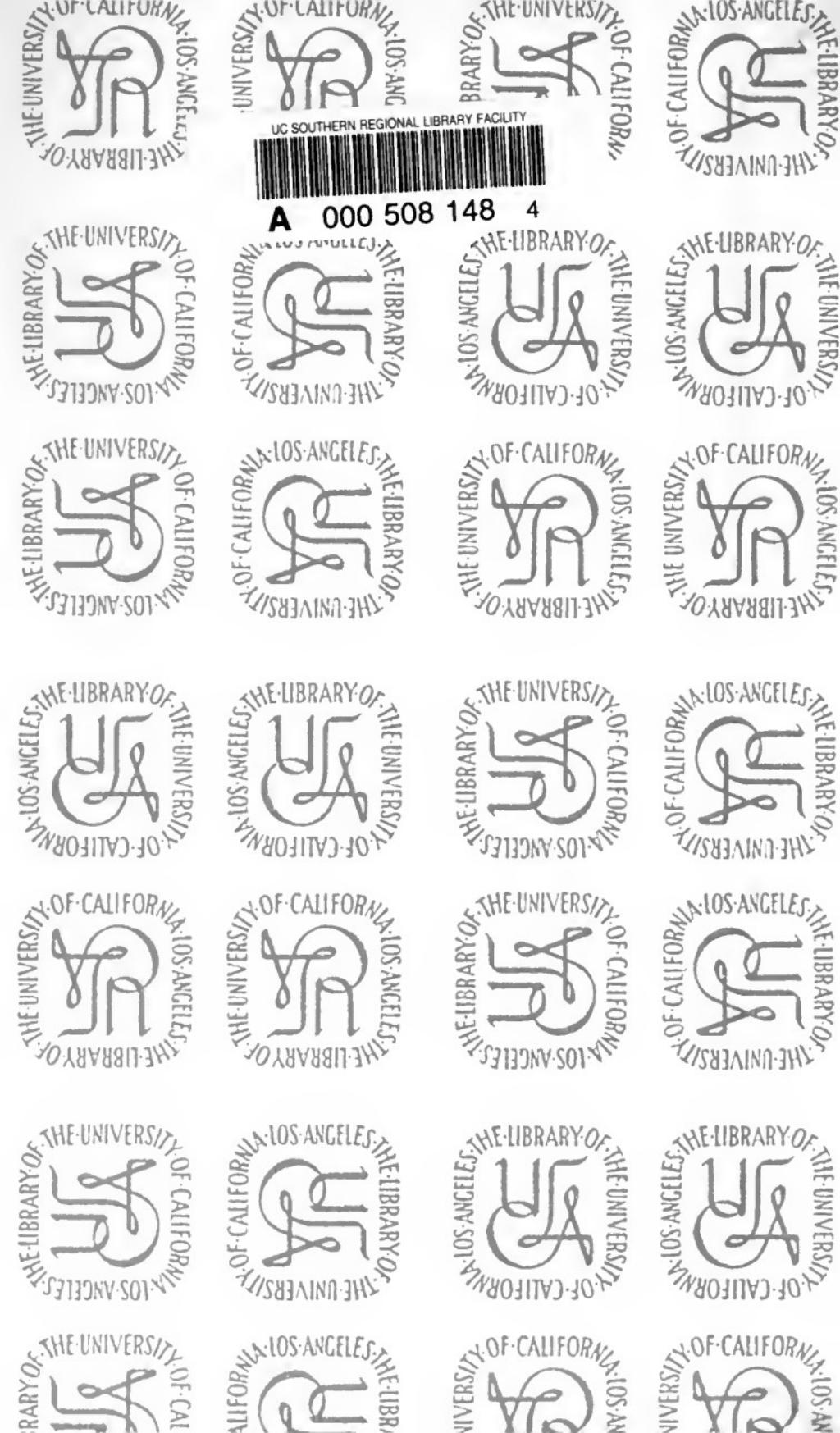
The majestic Old Cathedral remains a mute witness of the departed glory of men and events. She is the immortal landmark among the many brilliant but short-lived monuments that recall the history of Louisiana, and her centennial existence impresses far more than words those who know how sweet it is to weave into their lives the golden threads of the past.

THE END.

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